March, 1989 · Volume 1, Number 8 $4.00
AN INTERNATIONAL PALESTINIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE

THE RETURN

The Doves of The Intifadah

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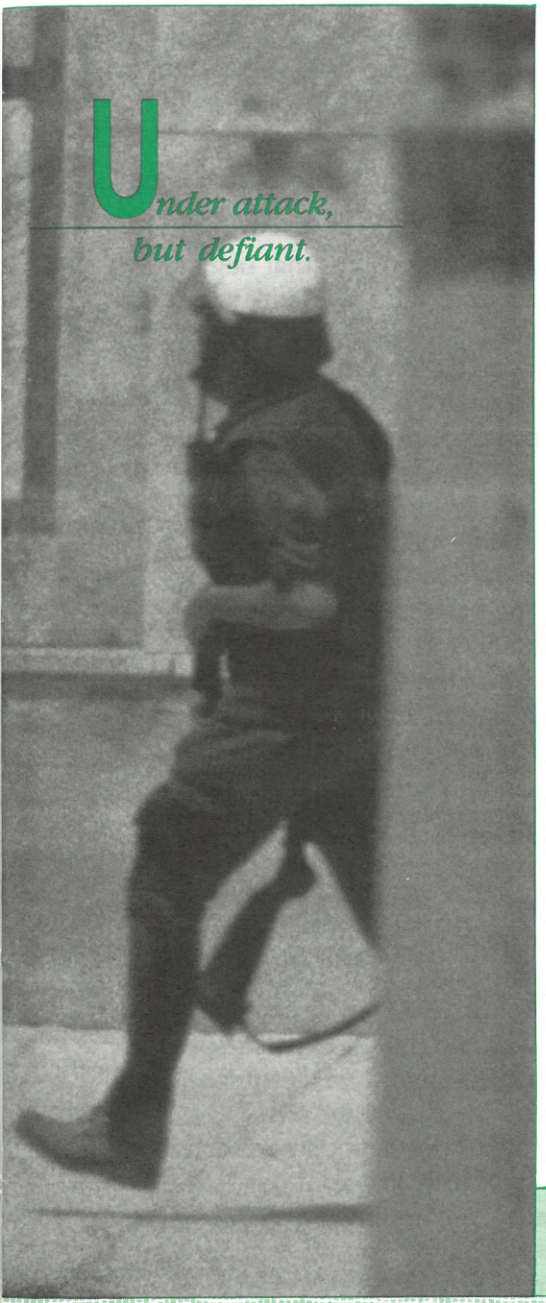

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Cover: Palestinians are now raising their flag, in defiance of Israeli regulations that forbid it, by tying the flag to doves and allowing them to soar free in the sky. Israeli soldiers respond by shooting and killing as many as those doves as they can.

THE RETURN is an international Palestinian monthly magazine. It is published in Washington, D.C., by *The Jerusalem Press Service*. The cover price is U.S. $4.00. Subscriptions are $24.00 per year. For additional savings, see envelope in the center of the magazine.

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Publishers are urged to send books relating to the Middle East for reviews.

The Bush Administration's "Early Thinking" on the Middle East: A Real Nonstarter

The earliest indications of what the Bush administration might do with the Middle East conflict, particularly the Palestinian-Israeli aspect of it, came from an unnamed senior State Department official—and it does not look good.

The senior official, who was traveling with Secretary of State James A. Baker III on his European trip in early March, summed up the "early thinking" of the Bush administration:

- The United States wants to foster a peace process that begins with Israel negotiating with Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Then it would branch out "to try" to include other Arab countries and the PLO in some form of direct negotiations.
- Secretary of State Baker, according to this senior official, is convinced that an international peace conference, at this time, is a "nonstarter."
- The United States would like Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to present a serious, "tempting" offer of real autonomy for the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This proposal would then be used as the basis for the dialogue between the United States and the PLO.
- The United States will condition Soviet participation in the peace process if the latter is willing to abandon, for now at least, the idea of an international conference, and join Washington in its step-by-step approach.

To put it mildly, if this "early thinking" is somewhat accurate, it stinks.

First, time and time again, Palestinians have told the world that their only legitimate representative in any peace negotiations is the PLO. The PLO has already recognized Israel's right to exist, the PLO has already renounced terrorism, and the PLO has already accepted U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. What else does the United States or Israel want from the PLO and the Palestinians? Total and unconditional surrender?

Second, an international peace conference is not a nonstarter," it is a significant starter. What does Israel fear? Peace? If that is the case, then the United States should be demanding the same concessions they have asked from the PLO—from the Israelis. Why is it that the Palestinians have to recognize Israel's right to exist and, at the same time, Israeli leaders refuse to recognize the Palestinians' right to self-determination including their right to establish their own state? Washington cannot claim to adopt the moral high ground and continually ignore the very same principles it preaches when it comes to the Palestinians.

Third, the United States is encouraging Israel's Prime Minister to bring forth in his upcoming visit to Washington a "serious and tempting" offer of real autonomy. There is nothing serious or tempting about any form of autonomy. What the Palestinians want is a state of their own.

Fourth, the suggestion that Shamir's autonomy proposal would be

used as a basis for the U.S.-PLO dialogue is ludicrous. Ever since the famous dialogue was initiated, the PLO has heard nothing but complaints from the Americans. Of course, the irony is that this so-called dialogue is developing into a forum to lecture the Palestinians on what to do. Unless the United States seriously reevaluates the substance of the discussions during its meetings with PLO officials, then there is no need for such a "*nondialogue.*"

Finally, the United States is not in a position to impose conditions on Soviet participation in the Middle East peace process. During the 1970s and most of the 1980s the United States was able to shut out the Soviets from any meaningful participation in the Middle East peace process. Today, that does not seem possible. In reality, the Soviets are playing a much more constructive role and are gaining influence among key players in the Middle East, including countries such as Israel and Egypt.

The Bush administration's "early thinking" is a nonstarter. Since it is early, however, there is time for a serious reevaluation. Let us hope that this message does not fall on deaf ears. □

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Can We Americans Do The Same?

While it "may not matter who gets elected where," the Palestinian people are not solely responsible for their struggle as is implied by the editorial, "The Palestinians Hold the Key" (*The Return,* November 1988, Issue #4).

Without U.S. aid, Israel would be forced to face reality and base her borders on whatever arrangements would produce a stable peace with her neighbors.

While there has been a decline in sympathy and support from the international community, Israel continues practices that are in violation of international law and there are many well-documented reports of these actions. We need to bring these facts home to U.S. soil and reexamine our position toward Israel. Americans must be moved from a state of apathy to one of vocal actions aimed at our government officials. Only when the American people voice their outrage at the atrocities committed by the Israelis upon the Palestinians, and demand action, will the Israeli government change its policies.

In President Bush's inauguration speech, he said, "goodwill begets goodwill." The PLO has extended a hand toward peace and shown that the Palestinian people are united in their quest for an independent state. Can we Americans do the same? □

Diane Chehab
Gainesville, Florida

WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER

The Heartbeat of Nablus

Raymonda H. Tawil

Repression reinforces resistance and rebellion. Palestinian youths dream of a free life with dignity and integrity.

Throughout Palestine, December 16, 1988 is known as "Black Friday" because that is the day that eight people from Nablus were killed at the hands of Israeli soldiers. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir had no answer for his officers the day after that fateful day in Nablus. The entire city was under curfew when the officers in charge of the "Black Friday" tragedy told Shamir—

> The basic values with which we grew up changed, whether we like it or not, during our service here. Every day children are being hurt.

Another soldier added—

> I have a very bad feeling. I feel humiliated in the face of the man I have to beat. These are not the values that I grew up with—the values of honor. He [the Palestinian] is getting stronger and I am getting weaker.

That day, the people of Nablus, all 120,000 of them were threatened with expulsion. And the Israeli army warned that the Old City, the Casbah, would not be that hard to destroy.

The army was afraid. The local military headquarters was trying to develop a strategy to confront "the stone." The stone threatened them. After all, one soldier in Israel's top military unit, the Golani Brigade was killed by a stone. How could it be that a soldier in the Golani Brigade was killed by a stone?

Thus, Israeli soldiers arrested people, they erected barbed wire and iron fences, and they positioned cement barriers at all of Nablus's entrances and throughout the Casbah. Meanwhile, the people were forced to endure days and nights without water or electricity. The whole city was holding its breath—keeping very quiet. Occasionally, the soldiers shattered the deadly silence with the sounds of gunfire.

At other times, the silence was broken by the screaming of people forced into the streets: both the very young and the very old. They were forced out of their homes while soldiers conducted thorough searches. The searches were brutal. People were insulted and humiliated; and they were beaten.

Meanwhile, in the Knesset, they were busy discussing the stones—the big stones and the small stones. The stones that can paralyze the military occupation authorities and prevent them from imposing order.

Back in the Casbah of Nablus, a big stone was dropped from a rooftop onto an Israeli soldier. It killed the soldier. Another time, a 63-year-old man emerged from a small dark alley, in the Old City, and stabbed a soldier. He was shot several times and taken away by an ambulance. When the Israeli soldiers searched his pockets, all they found was a crust of bread and some olives.

The city under siege prepared an urgent appeal to Pope John Paul II, and to the International Committee of the Red Cross:

> Nablus is under the tenth consecutive day of curfew. We need your help. Over 120,000 are suffering because of food shortages. We are

not allowed to bury those that have been killed, often until many hours and even days have passed.

From the walls of the ancient Casbah, the people cried out for freedom—they cried out to be saved from hunger—they cried out to defend their dignity and preserve the ancient heritage of their city.

All this was taking place in Nablus—the tired Old City of Nablus—the same Nablus whose name originated from the ancient Greek "Neo Polis" or "New City."

The outcry made the Israeli peace camp demonstrate in occupied Palestine and it made Israeli army officers protest Shamir's policies. The Israeli officers did not want to be known as "killers." Memory is too painful: the memory of those whom they hurt and killed, the memory of their forefathers, and the memory of their own children. The voices of their children echo and recall to them their sense of humanity.

And while the Israeli Knesset discussed "the stone," two Palestinians were killed on one day, six on another, one during interrogation; and on every day, no one knows the full number of wounded.

The appeal from Nablus stressed the *Intifadah*'s steadfastness and determination. Whatever the price, the Palestinian struggle will continue until an independent Palestinian state is established, by the PLO under Chairman Yasser Arafat's leadership, on the land of their ancestors. Thus, Israeli repression may add bloodshed, but the outcome will not be altered.

In the first week of March, the Israeli military authorities had closed 1,200 schools in the West Bank and Gaza. The Unified National Leadership of the *Intifadah* urged the Palestinians in occupied Palestine to strike in protest of the policy of making our people ignorant and the continuing policy of closing our educational institutions. In solidarity with those whose schools were closed, another 250 schools were closed by the students in general strikes and boycotts. Others sacrificed their jobs in protest.

Washington's refusal to begin peace talks and to encourage Arafat's pragmatic leadership will be "avenged" by extremists. Israel is leading the United States in the wrong directions. We must remind the United States that fundamentalists and extremists—both Palestinian and Israeli—cannot be manipulated or weakened in the absence of a peace process.

The U.S. delegate to the United Nations must learn to differentiate between liberation movements and terrorism. When he uses Shamir's words, he blames the victim for resisting his oppressor. No doubt, it is in the character of the American people to show admiration and respect for the people who struggle and reject tyranny and humiliation.

In one four-day period in March, 21 women aborted due to the effects of tear-gas inhalation and beatings. Does this mean anything to the survivors of the gas chambers?

From the Nablus ghetto to the survivors of the Warsaw ghetto, a message: Arafat has moved to save his people from tragedy, catastrophe, and disaster. He is bending over backward to accept conditions for a genuine peace. But neither he nor the Palestinian people will sacrifice their dignity. □

The flag, the youth, and the stones—in Nablus.

The Bush People and Palestine

High Hopes Dashed?

Raphael Calis

Times might have changed in the Middle East, but Washington has not noticed. More than two months after the Bush administration assumed power, an all too familiar tune is playing once again: expect no new, daring, or public U.S. peace initiatives in the Middle East in the coming few months—or at least, not until yet another "period of reassessment" is over and not until the new administration has completed all its key political appointments. According to administration officials, only then can one expect more "quiet diplomacy."

Of course, this tune is sweet music to the Israeli ear. "Quiet diplomacy" means no public embarrassments, and "no American initiative" means no American pressure. It also gives Israel and its powerful arm in the U.S. Congress the time to regroup and reassess. The pro-Israel lobby needs to launch yet another diplomatic offensive to dampen the recent shocks of the so-called U.S.-PLO dialogue and the U.S. State Department's damning human rights report, which blatantly charged Israel with abrogating human rights principles embodied in the United Nations Charter.

In contrast, U.S. foot-dragging, the "period of reassessment," is causing grave concerns in Arab circles, and is being interpreted as yet another U.S. maneuver to prevaricate and protect Israel's body politic from having to make some fateful and divisive moves—like withdrawing from occupied Palestine and talking directly to the PLO.

But to the Arab World it also means that the United States was never really serious when it decided last December to begin talking with the PLO. Rightly or wrongly, the move is now being interpreted as simply a U.S. attempt to gain the three major concessions from the PLO—recognition of Israel, renunciation of terrorism, and acceptance of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338. But the U.S. government is giving no substance in return.

The best proof of U.S. intentions, Arab commentators argue, is that since December, only one formal session, an opening session, has been held between the United States and the PLO in Tunis. Four "informal" meetings also took place, but Washington requested them simply to express "concerns" about two minor attacks against Israel from southern Lebanon. As yet, there have been no serious discussions on substantive issues.

There is also a creeping fear in Arab and Palestinian circles, as well as most European circles, that the slow pace with which the Bush administration is getting around to tackling the Palestinian-Israeli conflict may cause serious damage to a number of fronts in the region.

Following eight long years of Reaganism, Shultzism, and pro-Israelism in Washington, there is an apprehension in the Arab World that some observers might have pinned high and sometimes inflated hopes on the Bush administration. If so, this might lead to disenchantment and eventual bitterness. Such a trend may lead to an escalation of the Palestinian Uprising in occupied Palestine, or to military

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operations by Palestinian hardliners opposed to the U.S.-PLO dialogue.

Top administration officials, of course, are quick to refute what they describe as these "premature and rash" judgments. They are saying that a "period of reassessment" does not necessarily indicate either a lack of vision or a lack of intent to act.

"The Middle East is complex. There [are] a lot of built-in feelings and animosities. We simply want to sit back, reassess, see where we are heading, draw out some new strategies, install some new blood within our ranks, and then move cautiously and discreetly to implement our plans," explains one top State Department official involved in the Middle East. He said the policy options that are currently under preparation should be ready for Baker's study and approval within the coming few weeks.

The official, who asked to remain anonymous, adds, "But do not expect either quick fixes or major breakthroughs. This is not how progress can be made in that part of the world." His comments have been further confirmed by public comments that President Bush and Secretary Baker have made in the last few weeks.

But according to the Arab interpretation of the Bush administration's intentions, when Washington speaks about its desire "not to rock the boat," it is obviously referring to the usually warm and close relations with Israel. And recently, these relations have been rocked enough by the opening of low-key U.S.-PLO talks and the U.S. State Department's 1988 human rights report.

As a result, Secretary of State James Baker—no expert on the Middle East but described as a "quick learner"—has opted for what some officials describe as a cooling-off period to allow Israel the time to recuperate while also giving Washington enough time to "test" Palestinian intentions. It would also give Baker enough time to dig into the nuts and bolts of complex Middle East issues.

Arab officials warn that while Arab countries are ready to give the new administration the benefit of the doubt and allow it to gather its forces and plan its strategy for the region, there is always the danger that a long wait might once again give Israel the wrong signals. At the same time, they may open the way for radical forces within Arab and Palestinian circles to foil some of the recent successes.

But of equal concern to Arab diplomats has been the string of new appointments that have been made at the White House and the State Department.

Arab diplomats fear that all key posts at the sub-cabinet level relating to the Middle East, with few exceptions, have gone to officials who are either not experts on the region or to those who are known for their pro-Israel sympathies and connections. The sub-cabinet officials' importance will be felt even more in coming months because Baker likes to surround himself with a small coterie of trusted aides and experts. These trusted aides and experts greatly influence his thinking and policies, and in the process sometimes, ignore the advice of senior professionals who have spent a lifetime in the region.

Perhaps the most worrying appointment for the Arabs has been that of **Lawrence Eagleburger** as deputy secretary of state. Eagleburger's close connections to former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and his strong ties to Israel (he is known to insiders as having been the architect of the strategic agreement between Israel

Perhaps the most worrying appointment for the Arabs has been that of Lawrence Eagleburger as deputy secretary of state. Eagleburger's close connections to former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and his strong ties to Israel (he is known to insiders as having been the architect of the strategic agreement between Israel and the United States) have frightened the Arab camp. The Arabs fear that he will work actively to foil the continuation of the U.S.-PLO dialogue.

This study, which was authored by Eagleburger, Haass, Ross, et al., *argues that the legitimate rights of the Palestinians should be secured through direct negotiations, that the principal participants in the negotiations must be Israel, "Palestinian representatives," and Jordan, and that there should be a prolonged transitional period in which the intentions of the Palestinians to live in peace with Israel and Jordan "could be tested." This, of course, echoes some of the principles envisaged in the now-defunct Camp David agreement.*

and the United States) have frightened the Arab camp. The Arabs fear that he will work actively to foil the continuation of the U.S.-PLO dialogue.

Eagleburger has also been known as an opponent of continued arms sales to the Arab countries—an issue that puts him at odds with the policies of both President Bush and Secretary Baker, who have publicly advocated such sales.

Arab diplomats fear that Secretary Baker's lack of expertise in the complex affairs of the Middle East will allow someone in Eagleburger's position to play a key role in the evolution of the administration's Middle East policy.

The expected appointment of **John Kelly**, a former ambassador to Lebanon as assistant secretary of state for the Near East has also raised some eyebrows in Arab diplomatic circles. Other than his brief stint in Lebanon that ended in September 1988, Kelly has little or no experience in the Middle East. He is not an "Arabist" and is not considered a heavyweight within the State Department although some of those who know him say he—like Baker—is another "quick learner."

Lebanese officials who had contact with Kelly while he was in Beirut say that his approach ruffled a lot of feathers in west Beirut. At one time, Kelly is known to have clashed with Richard Murphy and special envoy April Glaspie, both of whom advocated an internal Lebanese settlement based on giving Syria a bigger role in a solution of the Lebanese conflict. Kelly reportedly argued in favor of giving the Syrians a less influential role—something that pleased President Amin Gemayel and his Phalangist supporters at the time.

Said one Arab diplomat, "Our fear is that this key Middle East post has been relegated to a lower level of importance, thus leaving the door open for more maneuvering and influence for people like Eagleburger."

Other Arab and Palestinian officials belittle the importance of Kelly's position in the State Department. One official noted sarcastically, "[former Assistant Secretary of State] Richard Murphy was an Arabist, an expert on the nuts and bolts of the Middle East, but he still failed in his repeated and incessant attempts to solve either the Lebanese or the Palestinian-Israeli conflicts."

But other Bush appointments to key Middle East posts within the administration also have become a cause for concern to Arab officials. These include the appointment of **Richard Haass** to head the Middle East Department at the White House's National Security Council. Haass, 37, held three State Department posts in the Reagan administration, none directly dealing with the Middle East. He was a Bush foreign-policy adviser in the 1988 Bush presidential campaign.

Another key appointment is that of **Dennis Ross**, a close Bush aide, who will hold the important post of director of policy-planning at the State Department. This is the department that prepares position papers for the administration on various foreign policy matters, including the Middle East. Although he has never served in the region, Ross is highly respected in Middle Eastern circles for his depth of knowledge of the intricate problems of the Middle East. The concern for Arab officials is that Ross is known for his pro-Israel policies. Not long ago, he was highly lauded by the *Washington Jewish Week*, which speaks for the pro-Israel community in the capital.

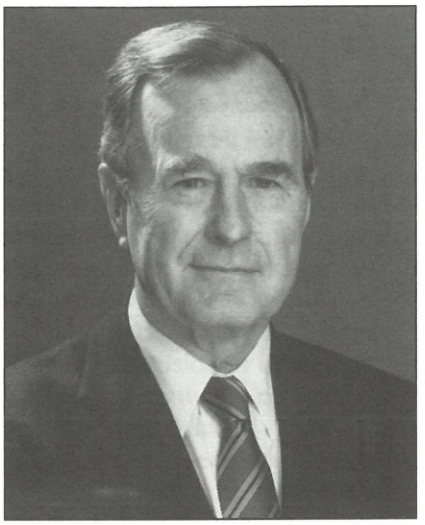
But what Eagleburger, Haass,

and Ross have in common is that the three of them were the authors of an important "think-tank" study on the Middle East issued in 1988 at the peak of the presidential campaign. The study has gained in importance because the three authors are now in key Bush administration positions, and the broad outlines of the administration's policies on the Middle East seem to be based on the proposals contained in this study. The report is entitled, "Building for Peace: An American Strategy for the Middle East."

It is equally significant that the year-long study included 35 experts on the Middle East—all known for their pro-Israel tendencies. The survey was published by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, which has emerged as a new center and "think-tank" manned by academics and politicians known for their hardline, unwavering support of Israel and wielding a lot of influence with the ranks of the new administration.

In essence, this study, which was authored by Eagleburger, Haass, Ross, *et al.*, argues that the legitimate rights of the Palestinians should be secured through direct negotiations, that the principal participants in the negotiations must be Israel, "Palestinian representatives," and Jordan, and that there should be a prolonged transitional period in which the intentions of the Palestinians to live in peace with Israel and Jordan "could be tested." This, of course, echoes some of the principles envisaged in the now-defunct Camp David agreement.

It also argues that "the Palestinians need to produce a leadership capable of clearly communicating and delivering on a commitment to coexist in peace with Israel." And, "The PLO has repeatedly failed this test." It urges the Palestinians in occupied Palestine to take responsibility for their political future by foregoing violence and engaging in a political process that addresses Israel's concerns.



U.S. President George Bush.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker III.

The authors express their belief that negotiations on final status issues will require Jordan's complete participation and cooperation. The study argues that, "Only Jordan can provide the anchor for an emerging Palestinian entity, some of the guarantees of a stable settlement that Israel will need, and the gateway to the Arab World for the Palestinians."

And another ominous conclusion of these experts is summed up in the following: "An international conference to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict is a negotiating forum that holds little advantage for the United States."

In a nutshell, if these recommendations become the entrenched policies of the new administration—as they seem to be at this early stage—there is a total rejection of the concept of self-determination for the Palestinians and their rights to a Palestinian state. There also seems to be an attempt to circumvent any key role for the PLO and, instead, efforts will be made to find alternative leadership in occupied Palestine. This obviously spells doom for the U.S.-PLO dialogue.

In addition, there seems to be a return to the concept of a major role for Jordan. The international peace conference approach to solving the problem seems to be rejected. A Palestinian state also appears to be definitely off the Bush administration's agenda.

Of course, a clearer picture of the direction of U.S. Middle East policy will emerge once the "period of reassessment" is completed and the direct contacts with top Middle East leaders, including Egypt's President Husni Mubarak, Jordan's King Hussein, and Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir get under way in Washington.

But unless a tangible and dramatic change in Israeli policies and in the U.S. approach emerge, it does not appear likely at this stage that any substantial progress should be expected. As a result, observers fear that the Palestinian Uprising will be escalated while hardliners within the Palestinian and Arab arenas will attempt to sabotage some of the major accomplishments Palestinian leaders have achieved so far. □

Photos: David Valdez, the White House

The Great Escape

Israel Forms Another "National Unity" Government

Khalil Jahshan

Faced with what may be the most serious political challenge of its existence, Israel decided to stick its head in the sand and escape from it. The Likud party formed another "National Unity" government with Labor—this time, with three ultra-Orthodox political parties as well. By friend and foe alike, the previous such government was dubbed a government of "national paralysis." It was unable to move decisively on many controversial issues.

This new government is already beginning to acquire a reputation as a government of "national blindness." It is unable or unwilling to recognize recent political changes brought about by the *Intifadah* and the dramatic peace offensive launched by the PLO.

The inconclusive results of the national elections held on November 1, 1988 indicate that israeli society is hopelessly divided. There seems to be no decisive leadership or political program capable of rescuing the Jewish state from its deadlock. The leaders vying for power in Israel lack the stature and courage needed to heal the ever-widening breach between secular and Orthodox Jewry, and the severe ideological divisions over the issue of peace with the Palestinians.

After 52 days of intense political haggling, often bordering on the absurd, even by Israeli standards, Likud and Labor joined forces to confront what they perceived as the "diplomatic crisis" facing Israel. On December 22, 1988, the coalition partners released the *Basic Guidelines of the Government's Programme* which commits the newly formed government to place the desire for peace "at the head of its concerns" by sparing no effort in promoting peace. Yet, the provisions of that agreement offer nothing but the expressions of a rejectionist, expansionist, and anti-peace policy.

First and foremost, instead of responding in kind to the PLO's recognition of Israel's right to exist, the Israeli government expressed its unequivocal opposition to any negotiations with the PLO. This is done, ironically, on behalf of an Israeli public which, according to the Dahaf Institute, predominantly favors holding negotiations with the PLO. An opinion poll survey conducted the same week the "National Unity" government was formed shows that 54 percent of the Israeli public supports negotiating with the PLO.

Second, although Likud leader Yitzhak Shamir prides himself on calling for peace negotiations with the "Arabs" without any preconditions, the guidelines clearly set several preconditions. Among these preconditions is Israel's opposition to the establishment of "an additional Palestinian state in the Gaza District and in the area between Israel and Jordan." Furthermore, the guidelines also prevent the coalition government from making any change in "the sovereignty" of the West Bank and Gaza, which is the only logical objective of any peace process.

Third, the guidelines reflect the traditional Israeli expansionist policy of settlement in occupied Palestine in defiance of interna-

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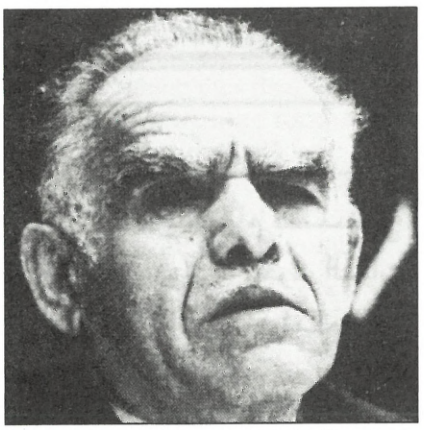


Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

tional law and U.S. policy. The agreement calls for the establishment of five to eight new settlements within a year, with additional settlements to be negotiated in the future between Labor and Likud. The U.S. government has traditionally considered Israeli settlements on Arab territory to be impediments to the peace process.

In addition, the guidelines intentionally ignore the dramatic developments of the last year which have changed the Palestinian-Israeli equation. The *Intifadah* is referred to as continuing "riots" and "violence" which must be quelled "forcefully." The Palestine National Council (PNC) resolutions of November 12-15, 1988 and the subsequent PLO peace overtures toward Israel are totally ignored. This, in spite of the universal approval the PLO won including the Reagan administration's decision to initiate a "substantive dialogue."

Yet, the great escape from present realities does not end here. The guidelines speak of reviving the Camp David accords which have been declared dead by most objective experts on Arab-Israeli affairs, including some key architects of the agreements. One has to wonder about the hypocrisy of Labor leaders who, throughout the political campaign, have criticized Shamir's Camp David approach as defunct and obsolete, yet found it convenient to endorse when it came time to forming a government.

The guidelines call for a revival of the Jordanian option. While the rest of the world has recognized the bankruptcy of the Jordanian option, it takes an Israeli government of national unity to pool its resources together, to deny the consequences of Jordan's decision to disengage itself administratively and legally from the West Bank.

Based on past record and present program, is it rational to expect a positive contribution to peace from this type of "National Unity" government?

Some observers of Israeli politics are encouraged by the "new flexibility" displayed by Shamir and other members of his government in recent weeks. They list as a significant softening in position his acceptance of a superficial international peace conference with strictly ceremonial functions. They also use as evidence his recently declared willingness to consider a "formal" or limited role for the United Nations in facilitating the peace process, and the diverse calls by several cabinet ministers for elections in occupied Palestine.

However, on closer examination, the Shamir-led government remains with no coherent peace plan, and no plan capable of matching the concessions made by the PLO in its peace offensive. In spite of Israeli disinformation campaigns and pronouncements to the contrary, the Shamir government "has no peace plan, and no such plans can be expected in the forseeable future," as the Israeli prime minister personally told European parliamentarians on a recent visit to Israel.

Shamir admits, however, entertaining some ideas "to promote negotiations with Jordan and with

Israeli Minister of Finance Shimon Peres.

Palestinians not identified with the PLO." His ideas, which he will be bringing to Washington, D.C. in April, include:

1. three to five years of "local autonomy" for the West Bank and Gaza;
2. elections for an administrative council, the members of which will serve as "legitimate representatives" in future peace negotiations;
3. redeployment of Israeli troops away from Palestinian population centers;
4. negotiations over the fate of the West Bank and Gaza, possibly within the framework of a ceremonial international conference; and
5. a possible "formal" or limited ceremonial role for the United Nations to facilitate direct negotiations.

Yet, in spite of this apparent softening of his extremist position, Shamir remains adamant about his opposition to a meaningful international peace conference. He remains equally adamant about his opposition to any PLO role in the negotiations as well as to the Palestinian right to self-determination, including the option of independent statehood. Thus, the

*See **ESCAPE**, page 40*

A Message to Israel:

You Must Pay a Price for Peace

El-Sayed Abdel Raouf El-Reedy

Three years following the signing of the treaty between Egypt and Israel, the Arab summit meeting in Fez, Morocco issued a declaration outlining an Arab peace plan that includes Israel and the formation of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza.

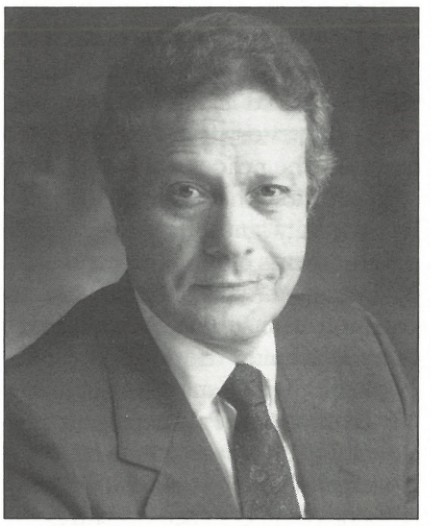
If the Arab position in general has evolved, the Palestinian position in particular has been profoundly transformed. It has moved steadily away from rejecting the concept of a two-state solution in Palestine and rejecting U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, to accepting both. The Palestinians are willing even to settle for a state in less than one-fifth of original Palestine. Now, the Palestinian people accept a Jewish state—Israel—and a Palestinian state—the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

This evolution climaxed in a series of moves during November and December 1988—first at the Palestine National Council (PNC) meeting in Algiers, then in Stockholm during a meeting between the PLO and a delegation of Jewish Americans, and finally in Geneva in mid-December.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's speech before the United Nations was supplemented by his statement on December 16. The Palestinian position was solemnly and unambiguously stated: The Palestinian people embrace the concept of a two-state solution and U.N. Security Council Resolution 242.

Various factors accelerated this evolution of the Palestinian position.

Regardless of their initial rejection of the treaty between Egypt and Israel, the Arab World has been influenced and conditioned by the treaty. And the Palestinians in occupied Palestine have long ago come to grips with the reality of Israel. They have no myths or illusions—they know that Israel exists and they have come to accept the Israelis as permanent neighbors. But they also yearn for a state of their own in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Their national aspirations have centered on freedom and an end to foreign rule.



Egypt's Ambassador to the United States El-Sayed Abdel Raouf El-Reedy.

Indeed, that is what the Uprising, the *Intifadah*, is all about.

The transformation which took place on the Palestinian side needs to be matched today by a similar process on the Israeli side, particularly that part of Israel which still clings to the fiction that the West Bank and Gaza will become part of Israel.

Egypt, and others, were telling

His Excellency El-Sayed Abdel Raouf El-Reedy is the Egyptian ambassador to the United States. This article is based on a presentation he made to the U.S. National Council of Jewish Organizations in Washington, D.C. on February 19, 1989.

the Palestinians to be realistic and accept the principle of two states in Palestine, which they finally did. In the same way, we need today to tell the Israelis that they will have to give up occupied Palestine and free Israel from the myth of territorial aggrandizement. Giving up these territories, in exchange for genuine peace, is the surest way to insure Israel's security.

A solution of the Palestinian problem would also open the way for Israel to be integrated into the rest of the Middle East. Normalizing relations with its neighbors would further Israel's security as its neighbors would develop political and economic ties with Israel.

Avoiding the hard decision to give up occupied Palestine can only worsen the conflict. Some Israeli hardliners argue that a Palestinian state would threaten Israel's security, or that the Palestinians would consider it a step toward the dismantling of Israel.

It is hard to believe that a state established in the West Bank and Gaza Strip could pose a threat to the militarily mighty Israel. A Palestinian state could be created in these territories embodying iron-clad commitments against irredentism. Besides, in the absence of a solution based on mutual recognition, old claims can continue, and trends toward moderation could be scuttled. We see a unique opportunity to reach a historic compromise between the Palestinians and the Israelis, provided Israel is ready to give up occupied Palestine.

As we observe the evolution of the Israeli position, we see a positive trend taking root. The Israelis are becoming more willing to find a political settlement rather than maintain the status quo. More Israelis are willing to meet with Palestinian leaders, including PLO representatives. These trends need to be encouraged.

Egypt, and others, were telling the Palestinians to be realistic and accept the principle of two states in Palestine, which they finally did. In the same way, we need today to tell the Israelis that they will have to give up occupied Palestine and free Israel from the myth of territorial aggrandizement. Giving up these territories, in exchange for genuine peace, is the surest way to insure Israel's security.

The need to resolve the Palestinian problem has become an international imperative. It is part of a global current to resolve regional problems. The whole world is tired of wars and conflicts—no less the Israelis and the Arabs, especially the Palestinians.

Wherever we look around, we see a process of peace working, be it in Central America, or in central Asia, in southern Africa or southern Asia, and even in Europe.

We see new thinking everywhere and a universal trend to build confidence in place of suspicion. We see peoples everywhere exploring new and even revolutionary ways to deal with deep-seated problems.

We see a particularly impressive experience in Europe, where countries which have fought for years, who were struggling to annihilate one another, have now succeeded in creating a structure—the European Security Conference—which encompasses all countries of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The European Security Conference creates new mechanisms to build confidence, reduce tension, promote human rights, and cooperate in solving pressing problems such as threats to the environment.

In the Middle East, we have a heavy agenda of similar problems which need to be addressed. The resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict stands as a prerequisite for the creation of such mechanisms to deal with urgent problems. In this regard, the United States and Egypt have a special role cut out for them in the Middle East. Our two countries must accelerate the process of transformation in the Middle East from an era of conflict to an era of peace and cooperation.

In this task we need not listen to the pundits who preach crisis management rather than crisis resolution, or to the ideologues who are wrapped up in fantasies and chauvinistic dreams.

The United States with its enormous global power and Egypt as a regional power, can work hand in hand so that the journey which we successfully began 10 years ago, between Egypt and Israel, can now be completed through an honorable resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

The peoples of the Middle East have great hope in U.S. President George Bush, who knows the intricacies of the problem, and who has the tenacity to help. I know that Egyptian President Husni Mubarak would be most willing to work with him so that the Palestinians and the Israelis can reach a historic compromise based on common interests, mutual recognition, and mutual respect. □

The United Nations & the State of Palestine

John Roberts

The PLO clearly went out of its way to try to express its aspirations for freedom in language acceptable not merely to the majority of U.N. members, who have themselves experienced foreign or colonial rule, but to the older, largely European, generation of U.N. members.

"I invite the Representative of Palestine to take his seat at the Council table." With these words the president of the United Nations Security Council, Nepal's Jai Alam Rana, signified the United Nations' tentative recognition of an embryo state. Rana's 14 words neatly symbolize the delicate position of the Palestinian delegation at the United Nations. Palestine is now formally acknowledged as a political entity, but it is there by invitation, not by right. And it will not get a chance to actually join the Security Council until it becomes a full member of the United Nations by right.

But there is no doubting that last November's Declaration of Independence, Chairman Yasser Arafat's successful address to the U.N. General Assembly in December, and the opening of a "substantive dialogue" between the United States and the PLO have radically changed the international context of the "Question of Palestine," as the United Nations routinely refers to the core issue of the Arab-Israeli dispute. The international standing of the Palestinian cause in general, and the PLO in particular, was considerably enhanced by the swift recognition accorded to the proclaimed state of Palestine by more than 93 countries. But while it is important to have the recognition of both the Arab World and the Non-Aligned Movement, the nature and extent of the new state of Palestine will principally be determined by two other factors. The first, of course, is the *Intifadah*. The second is the attitude of the great powers.

It is in the United Nations that the United States, Israel's ally and the independent Palestinian state's declared opponent, will confront its greatest challenge as it tries to tackle the consequences of the momentous decisions taken in Algiers. To begin with, the United States has failed to take into account the remarkable similarities between the approaches to peace taken by both the Palestine National Council and the United Nations. At the United Nations, Secretary-General Javier Peres de Cuellar went to great lengths to twin the

John Roberts is the U.S. correspondent for Al-Hayat, *a London-based, Arabic-language news magazine.*

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat addresses U.N. General Assembly in Geneva.

concept of Palestinian self-determination with the implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 in a single sentence.

"A comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israel conflict should be based on Security Council Resolution[s] 242 and 338, and take fully into account the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination," said an official U.N. statement. The language was remarkably similar to that of the PNC declaration which had called for an international conference to "be held on the basis of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 and the guarantee of the national and inalienable rights of the Palestinians, starting with its right to self-determination according to the principles and rulings of the U.N. Charter concerning people's rights to self-determination."

The PLO clearly went out of its way to try to express its aspirations for freedom in language acceptable not merely to the majority of U.N. members, who have themselves experienced foreign or colonial rule, but to the older, largely European, generation of U.N. members. In this, it secured some success. France declared that it had no objection "in principle" to the idea of a Palestinian state, but argued that it could not recognize such a state until its government and borders were decided. The United Kingdom took a similar approach. The PNC's actions were described as "potentially a very significant step forward. . . . We attach particular importance to the PNC's support for an international conference in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338."

In late 1988, while Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was urging President Ronald Reagan and President-elect George Bush to use the PNC declarations to build on the peace process, her Foreign Office in London was making it clear that the United Kingdom, too, accepted the justness of Palestinian aspirations, even if it questioned the practicality of the actual Declaration of Independence. "The British government acknowledged the Palestinians' right to self-determination, but the future of the Occupied Territories must be settled by negotiation. The declaration of a state was therefore premature," a spokesman said.

The British and French attitudes are of considerable importance. Peres de Cuellar wants the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council to set up a committee to consider ways of moving toward a Palestinian-Israeli peace. Such a committee, established largely as the result of a British initiative, was set up in 1987 to deal with the Gulf War and led to the drafting of U.N. Security Council Resolution 598, thus contributing significantly to the present cease-fire in the Persian Gulf.

Of the five permanent members, only the United States opposes the principle of Palestinian self-determination. And due to Palestinian willingness to recognize Israel, this, too, seems to be an obstacle which can be overcome.

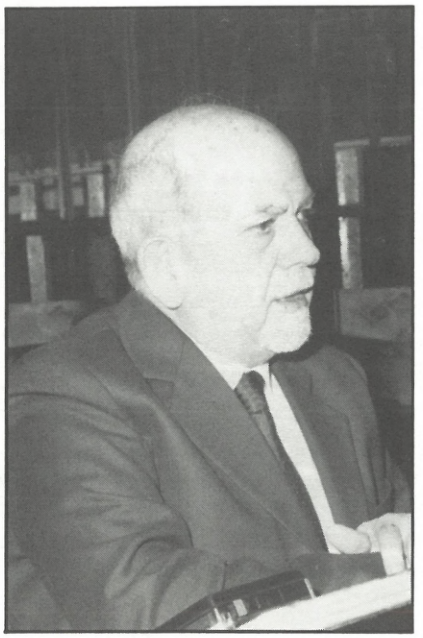
The PLO is clearly trying to involve the United Nations at every level of the peace process, a development which is not likely to prove welcome in Israel, which has an overwhelming distrust of the world body. The PNC declaration

called for "placing occupied Palestinian lands including Arab Jerusalem, under the supervision of the United Nations for a limited period to safeguard our people and to ensure a climate that would be propitious for the success or the work of the International Conference and to reach a comprehensive political settlement."

In adopting his position, the U.N. chief immediately distanced himself from the United States, which has refused to acknowledge that the Palestinian people have a right to self-determination. The United States argues that this is no more than a code word for independence, to which it is opposed.

Still, the PLO's suggestion that the implementation of full independence ought to be preceded by U.N. tutelage, could be one way of getting around U.S. objections to Palestinian independence.

There are, of course, tremendous problems associated with the idea of a U.N. trusteeship for the nascent state of Palestine, which is what the PNC idea amounts to. But it does at least reflect the widely shared belief that the United Nations should play a major role in creating the conditions for the implementation of Palestinian self-determination.



PLO Ambassador to the United Nations Zuhdi Labib Tarazi.

Photo: Courtesy of ADC

And it also acknowledges a very different practical reality: that in order to realize full independence, the Palestinians will have to work *with* the powers in the world community, not against them.

Nasser Al-Kidwa, the energetic and suave diplomat who is deputy representative of the Palestinian mission to the United Nations, has clearly realized that there is much to be gained by using the United Nations not just as a forum for criticizing Israel, but as an organization which can contribute to the actual resolution of the dispute. Along with Zuhdi Tarazi, the chief Palestinian representative, he has worked with key members of the U.N. Security Council to get a coordinated reaction on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights, but they are hamstrung in their diplomatic efforts because of the U.S. refusal to talk directly to them. The United States is still insisting that all U.S.-PLO discussions be routed via Tunis, in accordance with instructions left behind by Reagan's secretary of state, George Shultz.

A key issue for both the representative of the State of Palestine and for the West European and non-aligned countries which are working with the Palestinians on the issue, is to persuade the United States to let the United Nations be used in one of the main roles for which its was originally created: as a talking shop. In the long term, the United Nations is likely to play a significant role in an eventual resolution of the Question of Palestine, that includes cooperative action by the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council. □

FAITHFUL WITNESSES:

Palestinian Children
Recreate their World
by
Kamal Boullata
Preface by
John Berger

A touching, often disturbing collection of sketches and paintings presents life in the West Bank and Gaza from a new perspective: that of Palestinian children.
Life magazine

Where the TV cameras were banned and journalists forbidden, schoolchildren painted for the world in watercolors. Look at their pictures. And learn from their innocence.
From the preface by John Berger

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Al-Intifadah: A West Banker's View

Izzat I. Ghurani

The events that began to unfold in Palestine on December 9, 1987 represent a significant phase in the long history of the Palestinian struggle for independence.

The Palestinians have sought independence since the end of World War I. Until the *Intifadah* began, their efforts were encumbered by two major obstacles: international schemes to deny them their rights, as manifested in the Balfour Declaration and the imposition of the British mandate on Palestine; and, other Arab countries' "sponsorship" of the Palestinian cause—a sponsorship that paid lip service to the idea of Palestinian rights but often acted against them.

Throughout their recent history, the Palestinian people has sought to obtain its rights under the direction of two distinct leadership structures: the traditional elitist leadership which prevailed in the pre-1948 era, and a "populist" leadership which predominated after 1964. In both structures, power was traditionally located at the top of the pyramid. However, since the beginning of the *Intifadah*, the Palestinian *popular* Uprising, the locus of power has moved closer to the base. This is a significant development.

The *Intifadah* has strengthened the democratic structure of the Palestinian national movement, giving it an unwavering resilience. The *Intifadah* is also the result of a Palestinian realization that the Palestinians cannot simply rely on the "sponsorship" of other Arab countries.

In the *Intifadah*, the Palestinian people have taken full charge of themselves and their cause. The Palestinian people acted unilaterally to make major decisions concerning their future and the political process they would follow to attain their objectives. This was clarified and reaffirmed in the resolutions of the Palestine National Council which met in Algiers last fall.

A testimony to the success of the *Intifadah* and the rising influence of the Palestinians was the Palestine Liberation Organization's (PLO) ability in December 1988 to convince the U.N. General Assembly to temporarily move from New York to Geneva. Because of that move, PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat was able to address the international body following the U.S. refusal to grant him a visa to enter the United States for that purpose. What followed was a dramatic and dizzying week of fast-moving events.

While PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat addressed the U.N. General Assembly in Geneva, a Palestinian profile—unambiguous and firm—was beginning to emerge. It became clear that the Palestinians constitute a struggling and a peace-loving nation. It became clear that the Palestinian people believe in attaining their national objectives by peaceful means. It also became clear that the Palestinian people are fair-minded, seeking recognition of their own identity in terms of history, culture, and achievements, while respecting the identity of others.

Through the *Intifadah* and Arafat's address to the U.N. General Assembly, the Palestinians presented their case clearly and effectively. The world community

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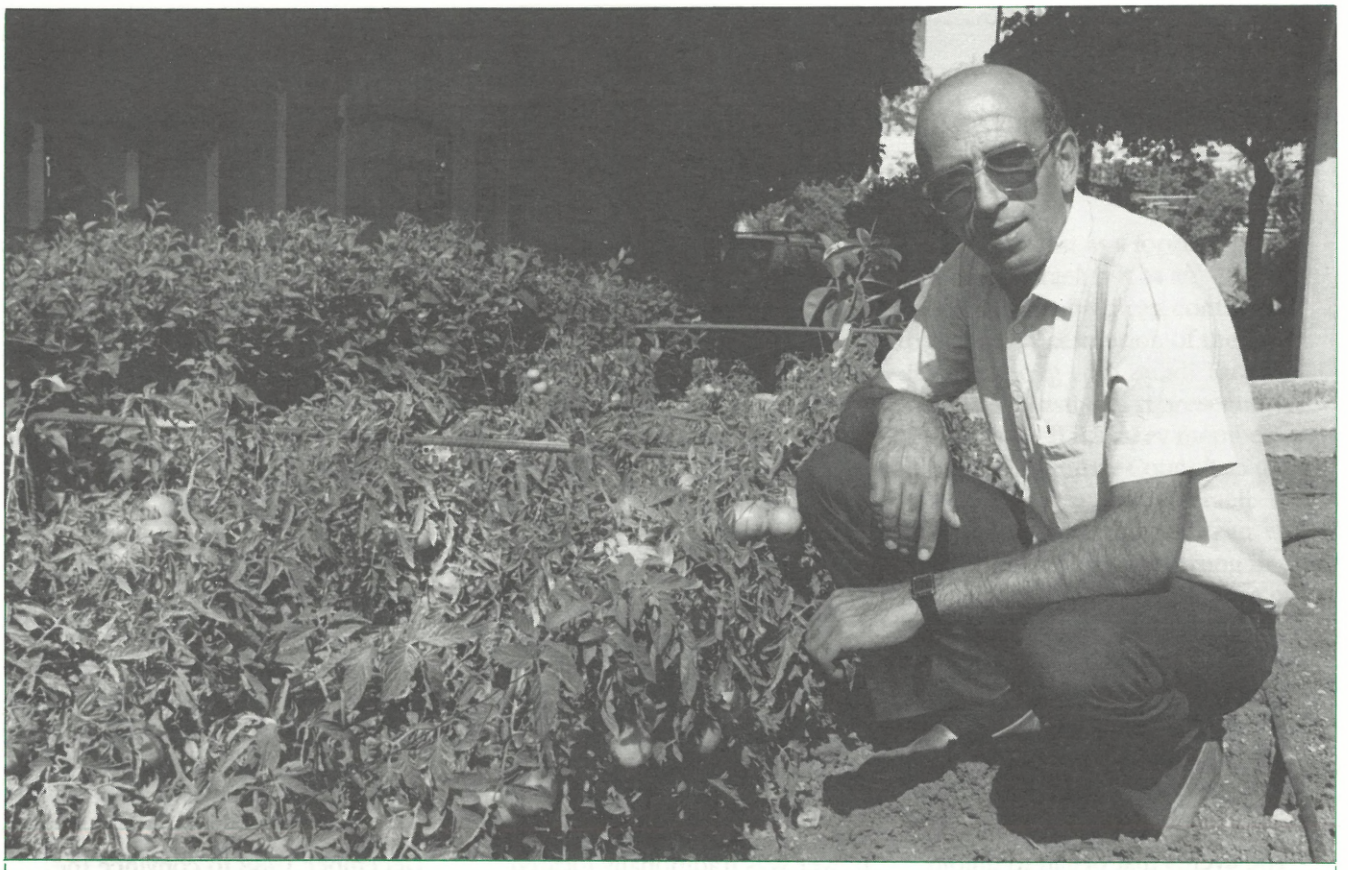


Jad Ishaq in his garden in Beit Sahour. He was served with a six-month administrative detention order for allegedly leading Beit Sahour's popular committee, and for espousing a philosophy of Palestinian economic self-sufficiency.

The Intifadah has *been an economic force emphasizing the principle of self-reliance. Among other things, the leadership has urged the people to boycott Israeli products for which there are Palestinian substitutes, to employ all means to cultivate their land, and to rely as much as possible on homegrown or homemade products.*

responded; it adopted resolutions favorable to the Palestinians. The U.S. government, when provided with clarifacations on the PLO's intentions, began a "substantive dialogue" with the PLO. Yet, despite the Palestinian people's success, the intensity of international intrigue against Palestinian independence did not subside. To some in the West, the Palestinian image is permanently stained. To others, the Palestinians are unruly dreamers whose claim for international respectability is not justified.

The *Intifadah* and its consequences have provided very visible justifications for Palestinian claims. The *Intifadah* is responsible for Arafat's address to the United Nations despite strong U.S. opposition. The *Intifadah* is a legitimate and nonviolent resistance. It has generated a high dividend internationally and was able to unleash powerful forces within the Palestinian community that have shaped the direction and content of their resistance.

An attempt to identify these forces and to describe their impact might be done more effectively from a future vantage point. Nevertheless, some are currently visible.

The *Intifadah* has been an organizing force which set the necessary guidelines for building the infrastructure of the independent Palestinian state. It has resulted in the formation of "people's committees." These committees work in the fields of education, health, home economics, security, economic assistance, family support, and the like.

The *Intifadah* has been a unifying force providing the opportunity for grass-roots participation and collective action under a unified leadership. The Palestinian people strictly adhere to the directives contained in the regular leaflets issued by the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU).

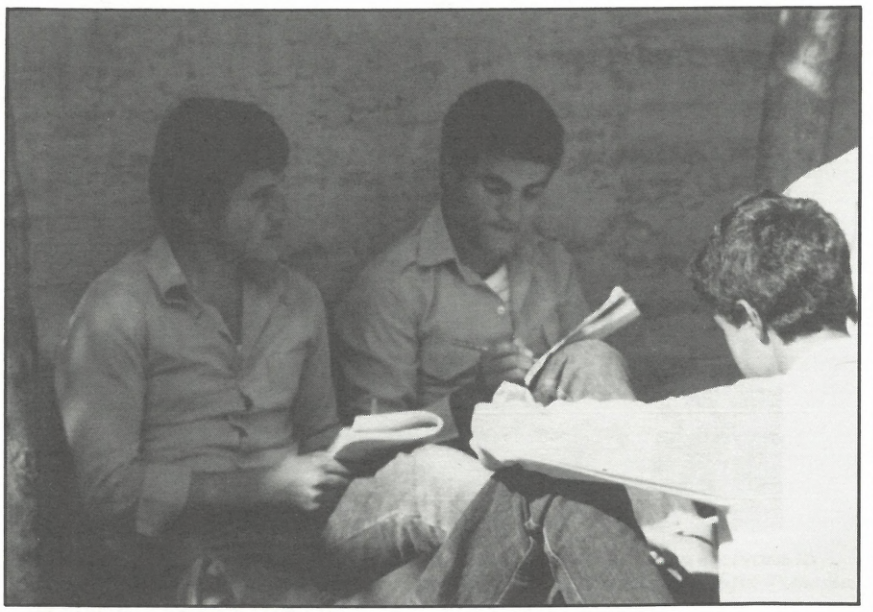
The *Intifadah* has been an energizing force restoring a sense of purpose in the people

and establishing a clear and well-defined base for political participation. The effect of this force can be seen most clearly among the young.

The *Intifadah* has been a political force able to define clearly the Palestinian objectives. These objectives include: the end of Israeli occupation, recognition of the Palestinian right to self-determination, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in liberated Palestinian land, and negotiation of a settlement in an effective international conference with full and equal participation of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of Palestinian people.

The *Intifadah* has been an economic force emphasizing the principle of self-reliance. Among other things, the leadership has urged the people to boycott Israeli products for which there are Palestinian substitutes, to employ all means to cultivate their land, and to rely as much as possible on homegrown or homemade products. Furthermore, Palestinians were asked not to pay taxes, to resign their jobs with the Israeli occupation authorities and not to work in Israeli industries. Families have been encouraged to be frugal and limit their expenditures to necessities.

The *Intifadah* has been a social force cementing communal relations and establishing patterns for interaction based on mutual respect, patience, and open-mindedness. Prior to the *Intifadah*, conspicuous consumption prevailed within parts of the community. Those with the means spent lavishly. Those without the means also spent lavishly—they borrowed. The impoverishing influence was visible in the dress, the weddings, the furnishings, the cars, and in the other aspects of life. Social divisiveness also left its mark.



Despite the Israeli closure of schools, Palestinian youth teach themselves.

Women in the village of Al-Essawiya come together to demonstrate. Beverly Orr

The *Intifadah* restored sanity to the spending habits of the population, reviving on yet another level, the communal spirit among the people.

As this new phase of the Palestinian struggle enters its sixteenth month, Palestinians can look back at the first fifteen months with satisfaction. Their sacrifices have been immense, their patience limitless, their gains substantial, and their determination—legendary. □

How Palestinian Children Cope with the Violence of Israeli Occupation

Karen White

I am hiding under my bed. I can see those big boots . . . slowly walking toward the bed. I squeeze my eyes shut tight, but when I open them there is a hateful, terrible face looking at me under the bed where I hide. Slowly the face smiles and beckons to me quietly, come here little boy-y-y-y-y.

Slowly his hand moves toward the big knife in his belt. . . . I am sure he is going to kill me with that knife. The face, still smiling, asks softly, who is a bad boy? . . . I say I don't know, it's not me. The face is ugly again. . . . It squints its eyes and the hand holds onto the knife tighter.

Through clenched teeth the face growls at me like a monster, saying, "Come h-h-here!" as he reaches under the bed to grab me. . . . He puts the knife against my forehead between my eyes and growls, "Say 'one, two, three'; and when you say three; I am going to kil-l-l *you. . . ." I screamed and screamed.*

The "bogeyman?" Yes. But Mohammad Abu El-Eish wasn't dreaming. His bogeyman is real and can really break your bones. He can kill you and your mother, too. No one can save you from this bogeyman, not even your father. And he's just outside your door. Sooner or later the bogeyman is going to get you.

Mohammad recalled this May 25, 1988 incident at his home in Jabalya refugee camp in Gaza as his little body shivered in fear at the memory. "More than ten" Israeli soldiers in "red and white" helmets broke into his home, and after witnessing his mother and sisters bludgeoned into unconsciousness, he ran to hide under his bed. When one of the soldiers located him as described in his statement, the man called to the others in his unit to join him in beating, kicking, and pounding the child.

Not able to walk, Mohammad was carried by one of the soldiers into a waiting halftrack military vehicle where he saw two friends, 7-year-old Anwar and 12-year-old Mohammad, "all bloody like me," the boy recalled. When they reached the military headquarters inside Jabalya refugee camp, the boys were carried from the vehicle and again beaten severely in an interrogation room. Mohammad was then carried by another soldier to the gate of the facility, dumped on the ground, and told he "would be killed" if ever caught throwing stones. Still unable to walk, the child crawled home on his hands and knees.

Mohammad's story is not unique. Thousands of Palestinian children in occupied Palestine are in constant confrontation with the Israeli military and the very real threat of physical injury, death, or separation. Six- to nine-year-old children are taken from their homes or the street and detained for hours or days and then released.

On increasingly frequent occasions, they are taken to military bivouac areas that dot the surrounding landscape, particularly around refugee camps. Israeli army units on duty in occupied Palestine eat and sleep in these bivouacs. And although the United Nations and the International Committee of the

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Karen White is a freelance writer based in Jerusalem.

Red Cross have requested permission to examine the sites, any inspection has so far been denied. Some of these children have been so severely traumatized that they have ceased to function normally.

The difficulties a number of Palestinian children are bound to experience in the future as a result of being targeted by a campaign of such violence is staggering. The Palestinian health and social services community is currently trying to assess what remedies may be needed as these children begin to react to the fear they experience in their everyday lives in occupied Palestine.

Usually, a parent's constant reassurance that there is no such thing as a bogeyman is enough to banish the nightmare. A child trusts a parent's proven authority and has confidence in a parent's ability to control uncertainties. But what happens to a child when that basic trust and confidence is, for whatever reason, permanently shaken? How does a child, who is frequently reminded that mother and father are powerless to protect, cope with fear and anxiety?

Illustration by 14-year-old Abdallah Afif—chaining and blindfolding everyone in Jalazon schoolyard. [Art reproduced here is from Kamal Boullata's *Faithful Witnesses: Palestinian Children Recreate their World*, to appear Spring 1989.]

Playing Games

Playing games and mimicking adult behavior are activities which help children understand the basic concepts in their environment. Playing *House* and *Dollies* helps children understand parental roles as good models for their own behavior. *Cops and Robbers* or good guy-bad guy games give children an opportunity to mimic good and bad behavior, and help them differentiate between good and bad in their culture.

Cops and Robbers may be the one good guy-bad guy childhood game that is truly universal, as both police and robbers exist in every culture. For Palestinian children living under occupation, the game is modified to help them overcome their fears. This, the most popular game, is called *Army and Arab*. *Army and Arab* is played by Palestinian children in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. Urban children tend to call the game *Demonstration*. But whether in the city or the village, the game mimics the children's real life experiences.

"Soldiers" are usually selected by elimination, as few children volunteer to be the bad guy. Once the "soldiers," both boys and girls, have been identified, the remainder of the players become "Arabs." Both groups then assume appropriate characteristics.

The "Arabs" in the game cover their heads with material in a *kaffiyeh* fashion, pockets are stuffed with stones, crayon-colored Palestinian flags appear, and all chant Palestinian slogans which can be heard blocks away. The "soldiers," having learned the most offensive insults in both Arabic and Hebrew, yell at the top of their lungs and swagger about. They wield pretend truncheons, tear-gas canisters, handcuffs, and rifles. Pebbles serve as live ammunition.

So far, many parents report that the offensive language has not surfaced at home. When questioned about where such insults were learned, children invariably recall an occasion when they personally were insulted by Israeli soldiers, or observed others so insulted.

The game *Tag* is also modified. Children in occupied Palestine often play *Arrest*. In *Arrest*, "soldiers" drag a captured "Arab" to the side and begin interrogating him in a heavily Hebrew-accented Arabic: "How old are you?" "Liar!" "You are older than 14!" "Your people are dirt, your Arafat is dirt!" "I will send you to prison forever!" "You are a dead man!"

A paper bag is produced from a hip pocket, placed over the "Arab"'s head like a hood, and the prisoner's hands are tied with a bit of string. Off he goes to prison—usually Ansar-III or Dahariyeh, the most notorious of Israel's military prisons. The "Arabs" attempt to rescue the arrested "Arab" as he is being escorted to prison.

The "soldiers" pretend to brutalize the arrested "Arabs" on the way to prison. The "soldiers"

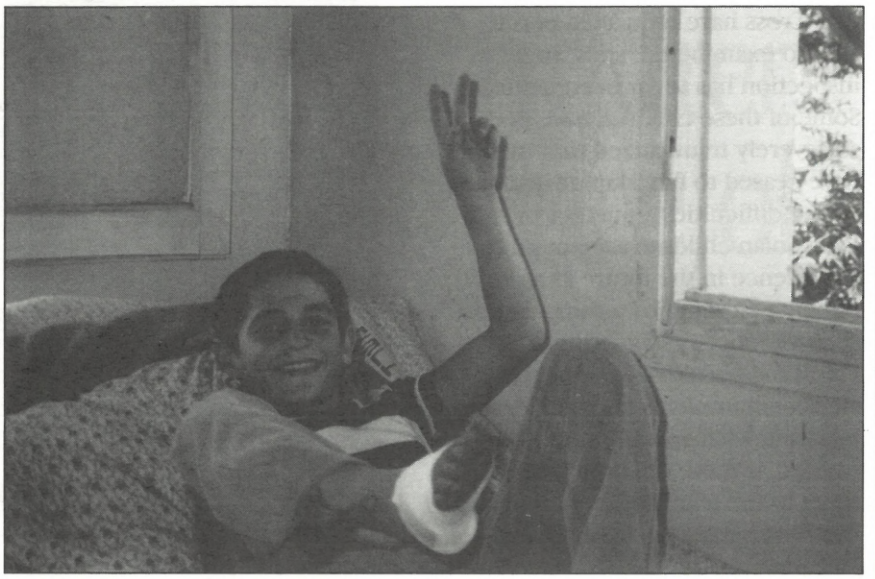
pretend to club, kick, and bludgeon the "Arabs," in the same manner the children have personally experienced or witnessed in their immediate environment.

Confrontations take place mostly in two ways: the "Arabs" will either erect a blockade and wait for the "army" to appear, or "Arabs" will respond to the signal "Allahu-akbar," indicating that someone is under attack by the "army" and needs help. The "Arabs" appear, stones in hand, to rescue the "Arab" individual or family under attack.

Another way which confrontations begin, also mimicking real-life, is by unprovoked and indiscriminate military violence. The children, as "Arabs," pretend to be selling food in a market or working at jobs. Then the "army" attacks with clubs swinging and guns firing. The "Arabs," doing nothing more than conducting their normal daily affairs, must then defend themselves.

Interestingly, "soldiers" are never killed. But they can be injured and they may limp for a short time. On the other hand, whenever an "Arab" is shot (hit by a pebble) in the head or chest, he is considered dead. The "Arabs" and the "soldiers" both race to the dead body, the first group to arrive claims the body. Should the "army" claim the body, it is unceremoniously dumped in front of the child's house. If the "Arabs" claim the body, the second phase of the game, *Funeral* begins. The dead body is covered with a Palestinian flag, a mock funeral procession around the neighborhood begins, and the "Arabs" gather at a make-believe gravesite. Then the game starts all over again with the "army" attacking the mourning "Arabs."

The incredibly violent Israeli response to the *Intifadah* is reflected in many other children's games. *Dollies* becomes *Nurse*. The "nurse" tends to the wounded and injured, or visits relatives in the hospital. Playing *House* includes barricading the front door against indiscriminate and violent military attack and careful peering out the door to see if the coast is clear of soldiers before embarking on a shopping trip. And rather than carry dad to work or perform some other normal function, cars and trucks are commandeered and made into makeshift ambulances to take wounded to the hospital or to help the *Shebab* escape from the "army."



Eight-year-old Aziz, shot in the foot with a rubber bullet, smiles for the photographer from his bed in Gaza's Al-Shifa Hospital.

Make-Believe or Real?

Many children playing such games near their homes have been attacked by the Israeli military, either because the children were seen throwing stones at each other, or a Palestinian flag was in view, or some other purported reason. Thus some children have found themselves suddenly crossing from an imaginary game into a very real and violent confrontation with the military.

But perhaps more disturbing, the children are sometimes unable to differentiate between real confrontations and make-believe. They copy reality so completely that they seem to forget that the consequences of confronting a real soldier can be as real as the soldier.

Ali is a four-year-old boy from Jabalya village in the Gaza Strip. On February 1, 1989, the little boy pretended to shoot at a passing Israeli military patrol with a tiny, plastic gun. Three of the Israeli soldiers attacked the boy, one soldier held him, another held his right arm out straight while slapping him across the face, and the third pounded the boy's outstretched arm with a wooden truncheon. As the soldier threw him to the ground, another soldier struck him on the back with a rifle butt. Ali's right arm was fractured and is now in a cast.

Others, like nine-year-old Husam of Gaza, took the game of "Army and Arab" directly to the real Israeli army. Using military terminology, Husam described his imaginary/real confrontation:

> It was March 8, around 10:00 in the morning when I

put on my uniform. My clothes were khaki colored and I had a rucksack on my back with a wire coming out the top, my radio antenna. I wore a plastic helmet, and from my belt hung three stones, my grenades, and two empty coke cans, my tear gas canisters. I also had a piece of wood which I strapped around me like a gun. Ready, I marched toward the main street in Shajaea. After two minutes IDF jeeps came. I started with the tear-gas canisters, lobbing one at each jeep. I also threw my grenades, but for some reason they didn't explode. I used my machine gun then, but because there were two jeeps, I decided it was best to retreat. The soldiers seemed surprised at my attack and followed me when I ran away. As I ran, I threw away my rucksack to lighten my load, The jeeps stopped to examine it and then two of the soldiers chased after me on foot. At the end of the street, I saw another jeep coming toward me. I tried to climb over the wall but they caught me by my leg.

There were seven soldiers altogether. They handcuffed me and put me in a jeep with one soldier. They took me to Shajaea cemetery and beat me all the way there with wooden truncheons. Then the soldiers punched me in the face and ordered me to say I was a woman. I told them Shamir was a woman. They ordered me to curse the Palestinian leaders, I cursed theirs.

Two more jeeps arrived, the soldiers took me out of the jeep and held me from behind. Two soldiers held me while the others took turns hitting me. I fainted and when I came to, they were pulling me, shaking me, laughing at me. I told them that we would be the ones who would laugh and I gave them the "V" victory sign. Then they became very angry and beat me badly. After that I started to cry because they beat me so hard. They left me lying on the ground. I tried to stand but I couldn't. My legs were too sore to walk. I tried to crawl, and stopped crying when I saw my friends and family coming toward me. They carried me to the hospital where I spent ten days in bed.

Signs of Hope

In these games, the "army" always loses, the "Arabs" always win. The game is an exercise in moral confrontation as the child sees it. Because the children playing the "Arabs" deliberately never use firearms to match their opponents in this game, only stones, the winners are defined as those who demonstrate courage, those who assert themselves, and those who refuse to be victimized. From the losers, the "army," the children learn that might is not always right, guns are no contest for moral superiority, and brute force cannot guarantee victory or succeed in domination.

The moral lessons in these variations of the good guy-bad guy games are greatly amplified and more evolved than simply "you should not do bad things," or "you should respect those with power and authority." In the Palestinian child's reality, those with power and authority are homicidal; and the robber, as forcibly defined by the authorities, never did anything wrong.

The identification of the bad guy as always army or soldier, rather than Israeli or Jew is significant. The bad guys, are identified simply as soldiers. The children are consciously identifying and rejecting militarism. They are rejecting the superficial authority of the gun and brute force. They are rejecting military uniforms, not the people inside those uniforms.

In playing these games, the children also refuse to be suppressed. Learning to cope with the intense fear of their real bogeyman, Palestinian children learn to face fear and conquer it. Instinctively, the children are demonstrating an understanding that they are not bad guys and therefore do not deserve to be targeted by homicidal authority figures. Among other things, the Palestinian child's innocence is reassured.

Dr. Francis Azraq is a clinical psychologist who graduated from Paris University. Azraq worked for ten years as a psychotherapist in French psychiatric hospitals. His work is now focused on two homes for boys and girls in the Tulkarem area where the troubled adolescents benefit from a dynamic therapy program he has developed. Along with others in the health planning community, Dr. Azraq believes comprehensive individual and family mental health programs may be among the most important community health priorities.

Dr. Azraq explains that children play the games that they play in order to overcome early and untamed anxieties. Whenever children are overly scared, they try to rid themselves of the thing causing them to be so afraid. By pretending and repeating scary situations over and over, children grow more accustomed to them.

*See **VIOLENCE**, page 40*

Stereotypes of Arabs in Israeli Children's Literature

Suha Sabbagh

From all the horrors of occupation to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's statement equating Palestinians with grasshoppers, it is evident that Israelis perceive Palestinians as subhuman.

The extent to which the negative Arab stereotype permeates Israeli culture is evident in two works on children's literature in Israel: *Through the Hebrew Looking-Glass*, 1986, by Fouzi El-Asmar, a Palestinian who grew up in Israel; and *Arab and Jew, Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land*, 1985, by David K. Shipler. Shipler was a correspondent with *The New York Times* serving as its bureau chief in Jerusalem from 1979 to 1984. A chapter in this book is devoted to Arab and Jewish perceptions of each other.

Both authors concluded that in Israel, there is a concerted effort by writers of children's stories to create an ugly image of the Arab. In doing so, Israeli authors of children's literature make it easier for future generations to execute the Israeli policies of Palestinian and Arab oppression.

Whether it is intended or not, such distortions serve to ease the Israeli conscience while Israeli policies continue to abuse the Palestinians. For example, in the aftermath of the April 1988 shooting death of the teenage settler Tirza Porat outside the Palestinian village of Beita, blatantly racist calls for the total destruction of Beita and the expulsion of its inhabitants were made openly by many factions in the Israeli Knesset (parliament). Even though the Israeli army investigation proved that Tirza Porat was accidentally shot by her accompanying guard and the people of Beita did not harm her in any way, people's houses were blown up and some people were even deported—all of them, of course, Palestinian.

Israeli children's literature attacks Arabs and especially Palestinians, by distorting history, and by painting Arabs as landless, ignorant, wandering bedouin—always dirty, and often foul-mouthed.

Shipler writes "each war and riot generates its own children's literature, which then survives to carry the theme into the future." In a story by M. Garin, *Devil 2 Leaves for the Border*, which takes place two weeks before the Sinai campaign, the message is clear: All residents of Qalqilyah [a town on the border between occupied Palestine and Israel] have an implacable hatred for Israel. Consequently, the Israeli army has no choice but to take actions against them. In this story, the Israeli army blows up Qalqilyah's police fort—heroically.

A 1939 story by Eliezer Semoli recounts the tale of riots in Hebron during the 1936-39 uprising. One passage contains a frightening message: "Daddy, Daddy, they killed so many Jews in Hebron . . . and children, too . . . in Hebron and Motza! and other places, too." Arabs are depicted as all out to kill Israeli children. Therefore, what is a Jewish Israeli child to think the next time he sees an Arab? After being bombarded with such examples of Arab hatred for him and his people, the Jewish Israeli

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child will most likely develop a fear and hatred of Arabs.

All too often in Israeli children's literature, Arabs are described as landless, nomadic, ignorant Bedouins. In this negative image, the Bedouin is described as unattached to the land and able to roam freely throughout much of the rest of the Middle East. He has no reason to care—and may not even have noticed—that he is no longer allowed to wander through parts of Palestine.

But by far the greatest number of Palestinians, and Arabs as a whole, are not Bedouins. Historically, almost all Palestinians are a people with permanent homes and farms in towns and villages. And like traditional communities of small towns and farmers anywhere, Palestinians are fiercely attached to their land.

According to El-Asmar, the negative stereotype of the Bedouin as the ignorant nomad justifies the myth that when the Zionists came, Palestine was a land without a people; and that settlement of Palestine did not really take land away from anybody. Thus it was convenient to portray Arabs, especially the Palestinians, as "bumbling Bedouin" who did not care about the land.

El-Asmar writes that Israeli authors of children's books present thieving as a typical Arab characteristic. Arabs steal primarily from Jews. In contrast, there is only one story that even mentions Jews stealing from other Jews; and, in that case, the robbery takes place in an urban center as opposed to a rural setting in which the story takes place.

Through a story that deals with Harun Al-Rashid and two of his favorite thieves, a day thief and a night thief, the author Yirmiyahu Rabina extends this robber image to encompass all the Arab World. At

Drawing by Sabi Atteyih.

the end of the story, the Caliph, who is very fond of his thieves, rewards them:

> [H]e appointed his night thief as Mufti [supreme Muslim religious authority] and his day thief as Qadi [religious judge] in the capital of Baghdad, and their sons and their offspring as policemen and officers in all Arab states (Rabina, 1948).

The lesson of such a story is that Arabs are not trustworthy. They are selfish. They are not morally sound. They lack respect for others'—especially Jews'—property and therefore they lack respect for other human beings. How then is a little Israeli to develop any form of respect for Arabs?

El-Asmar also writes that authors of Israeli children's books make little distinction between the lifestyles Palestinians prefer and the lifestyles forced upon them by Israel. Poverty and squalor—the inevitable results of displacement, dispossession, racism, and occupation—become a matter of racial choice. Palestinians are dirty and poor because they want to be so, not because they have no choice.

> [A] gang of [Palestinian] children and infants . . . walked about as naked as on the day of their birth: dirty, tangled hair and watery eyes. They surrounded them [clean Israeli children] from all directions, their bellies large, swollen and protruding like full water bags (Semoli, 1953).

Thus, in addition to not respecting others' property, the Arabs—especially the Palestinians—do not respect their own property, or indeed, themselves. If the Arabs are so bad to themselves that they become repulsive and dirty then why should Israelis treat them any better?

Any tourist who visits Israel will be surprised to learn that almost all curses on street corners are exchanged in Arabic. Most Jews do not speak Arabic, but can easily curse in it. In Israel, Arabic is perceived as a debased language fit only for cursing.

El-Asmar's research goes further to show that the Arabs themselves are presented as experts at cursing. The author writes, "one of the consistent and most marked features of Arab behavior as portrayed in [Israeli] children's books reviewed in this study is regular, intense cursing."

The Arab curses everyone, including family members. In one story, one Arab exclaims to another—

> By all ghosts and devils, may your soul and your mother's soul be liquidated and may the prophet curse you and may you never be blessed to sit under the protection of his beard (Haim Eliav, 1975).

If Arabs curse everyone, including each other, then why should the Israelis not curse them?

If there is an Israeli stereotype, it is that of a superhero. The Israeli is always conducting spectacular attacks and his determination knows no limit—a vivid contrast with the depiction of Arab soldiers as fearful and stupid. Israeli identity is built primarily upon the negative image of the Arab.

Entire series have been published depicting the Israeli as a superhero. After reading the results of El-Asmar's research, the reader is left with the impression that these stories are didactic and indoctrinating, and lack imagination. It reminds one of the literature of totalitarian regimes:

> "In order that none of us remain alive to be interrogated by torture by the enemy, should the aircraft be shot down before we reach our target," said Meno with a fascinating smile, "we will not take with us any parachutes. We will all be smashed with the crashing plane and the Egyptians will never know what we aimed to do in Sinai" (Abner Karmeli, 1973).

When it comes to the land, the Jews, unlike the Arabs, came to Palestine to settle in and care for it. They use modern agricultural techniques, irrigation, soil conservation, and forestation. Techniques that Arabs—the few who are depicted as farmers—are seen as too reactionary and backward to do. It is conveniently not mentioned that Palestinians are often not provided the means that Israeli farmers are provided to acquire financing, water, hardware, and other prerequisites needed to engage in modern farming methods.

Israeli images of the children of the *Intifadah* as brutal, bloodthirsty, and out to kill the settlers and destroy the state of Israel, are rooted in stereotypes of the Arab in Israeli films, literature, and textbooks.

> ***In order to be a victim, you have to create an image of the enemy as a huge monster.***
>
> —Danny Rubenstein

"In order to be a victim" observes Danny Rubinstein of *Davar*, as quoted in David K. Shipler's *Arab and Jew, Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land*, "you have to create an image of the enemy as a huge monster." Otherwise one might risk empathizing with the enemy—their demands may be legitimate.

Rubinstein's statement explains Israel's need to always appear to be a victim, though the Israeli army is the fourth most powerful army in the world today. Still, Rubinstein does not take into consideration the extent to which the negative Arab stereotype has become an integral part of Israel's identity. In addition, Israel's identity as a superhero, as a morally and technologically superior nation, has been established on the foundation of the negative stereotype of the Arab. This is one of the most serious stumbling blocks toward peace. After all, why should subhumans be granted equal rights with humans?

Many more stories are discussed by both authors in a way that explains the nature of the Arab stereotype if not its long-term consequences on shaping political developments. To what extent these stereotypes are a deterrent to peace is a question that falls outside the realm of both works.

Another question which is not discussed is the long-term psychological impact of the Arab stereotype on Jewish identity and on the Palestinians who must endure such a distorted view of themselves and the practical results of such a view. One cannot help but wonder how a people who suffered from some of the worst consequences of stereotyping, can be so insensitive as to stereotype and abuse the Palestinians within Israel and occupied Palestine. □

The *Steel Marble*: Israel's Latest High-Tech Bullet

Judith Gabriel

One day in mid-January, a chilling rain was pouring down on Jerusalem, and in the intensive care unit of Al-Maqassed Islamic Hospital, health-care workers agonized over yet another fatally wounded Palestinian youth. The weary doctors monitored the life-support systems, even though they knew that the systems would only postpone the inevitable. The young patient was shot several hours before, but the bullet in his head—a new high-tech bullet—was still slowly meandering through his skull. And as it meandered, it slowly ate away at his brain. Palestinians call it "the *steel marble*."

The new bullet is a round, nut-sized, metal sphere wrapped in a thin rubber covering. It weighs about one ounce, and because it is heavier and denser than most human tissue, the bullet insidiously worms its way through body organs every time the patient moves. Once inside the skull for example, its shear weight causes the *steel marble* to slowly rip through the brain. And every time the patient moves his head, it changes course. Thus, the *steel marble* burrows itself into different deeper parts of the patient's brain.

Doctors say there is no way to surgically remove the bullet, and there is no way to stop its circuitous route of destruction.

When the *steel marble* was added to the Israeli army's arsenal in early December, Israeli military officials claimed it was an innovative design. The new bullet was supposed to be less lethal than the old so-called "rubber" bullets. (Although they are called "rubber" bullets, these bullets are not made only of rubber. They have a metal core.) In reality, the *steel marble* proved to be as harmful and as fatal as any live bullet, particularly when shot at close range.

Clusters of 10 to 20 *steel marbles* are fired from a rifle-borne canister, or from a cannon-car, at any one time. The cluster of *steel marbles* fans out to strike targets over a wide area.

An 11-year-old Tulkarem boy was shot with the *steel marble* in early January. The bullet lodged in his chest, and finally it killed him. On January 14, a 15-year-old Nablus girl was shot in the head with a *steel marble* that killed her. Witnesses said that Israeli soldiers shot her as she and several women tried to stop the Israeli soldiers from beating her cousin.

As news of the new bullet spread, criticism began to mount, but Israeli army spokespersons continued to defend their new device. They claimed that the steel ball was specifically designed only to knock a target unconscious. But even a group of senior officers protested that the new bullets were causing too many deaths. The Israeli army itself apparently started to rethink its "innovation" in the wake of international media coverage. By late January, the use of the *steel marble* appeared to be subsiding—at least for the time, doctors reported.

Shoot-To-Punish

On the eve of the *Intifadah*, the Palestinian Uprising, the Israeli army arsenal included the conventional "rubber" bullets,

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several kinds of tear-gas grenades, wooden clubs, water cannons, and 22 caliber sniper rifles. One month after the outbreak of the *Intifadah*, Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin announced his "force, power, and beatings" policy, which quickly resulted in a rash of broken and mutilated arms, hands, and legs. The wave of bone-breakings subsided after widespread protests. But ten months later, as the *Intifadah* still stormed around him, Rabin stated that it was his policy that rioters must emerge with "casualties and scars." Thus began the "shoot-to-punish" policy.

While it frequently uses standard live ammunition (officially, of course, only in life-threatening situations), the Israeli army has flaunted its search for high-tech weapons that it claims are non-lethal. Each new bullet is introduced with announcements that it is safer than the last. And after its inevitable "baptism of fire" in occupied Palestine, each new high-tech device tallies up new fatalities and increasingly devastating kinds of injuries.

The first attempt to find a new-and-better bullet resulted in the introduction of the so-called "plastic" bullet in August 1988—eight months into the *Intifadah*. The tiny, lightweight bullet was designed "to injure but not kill" protesters. The "plastic" bullets were supposed to replace conventional "rubber" bullets because of the "rubber" bullets' relatively short range. Military officials said the new "plastic" bullets were less lethal—they contained less gunpowder than regular shells, and traveled slower. However, the actual result was a tremendous escalation in the number of Palestinians wounded in August and September. In the ensuing five months, the bullets that were designed to "wound but not kill" killed at least 50 Palestinians.

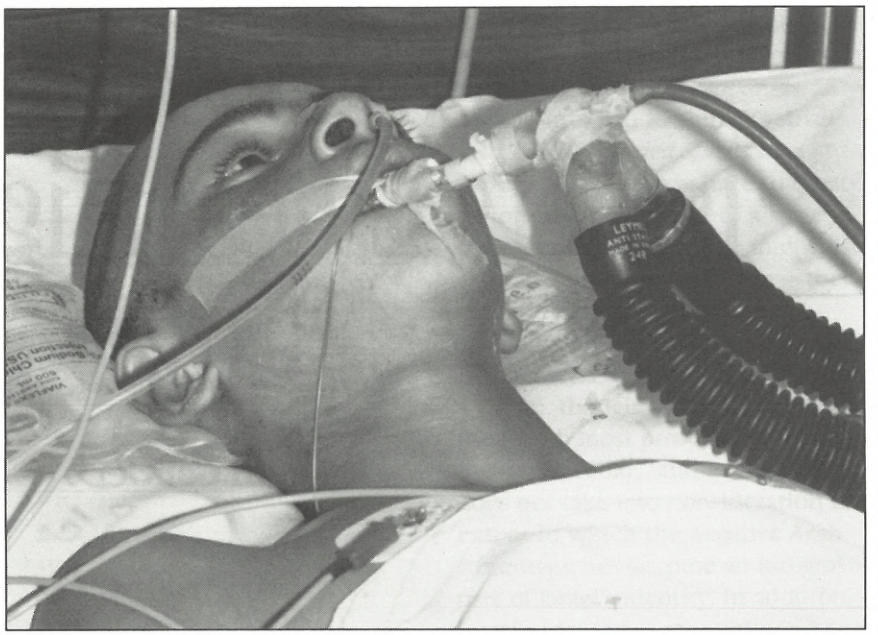

Photo: Judith Gabriel

Seventeen-year-old Marwan Mugari, lying unconscious in Jerusalem's Al-Maqassed Hospital. He was shot with a *steel marble* in Gaza's Nusseirat refugee camp.

How could a *plastic* bullet be so deadly? Like "rubber" bullets, the "plastic" bullets are not entirely made of plastic. In fact, according to one Palestinian doctor, the material used in "plastic" bullets is comprised of 70 percent zinc, 20 percent glass, and only 10 percent plastic. Another unofficial analysis suggests that the material is a mixture of plastic and aluminum (or bauxite) or some other metals. Several reporters now refer to "plastic" bullets, more accurately, as "plastic-metal" bullet.

There is yet another plastic bullet, the "dum-dum" bullet. A dum-dum bullet is composed of a plastic external layer that "wraps around a metal container holding foreign bodies, which are, seemingly, broken glass." According to information gathered shortly after its debut on the ammunition scene, Israeli Professor Israel Shahak described how the bullet, on entrance into the human body, apparently "is broken by impact and disperses inside the body—including inside the blood vessels—foreign bodies that move in it (the body), which are very difficult to discover, very difficult to remove, and which become [lethal] as the time passes."

There have even been reports recently of yet another item to show up in the Israeli army's arsenal. The new item was described by journalists as an anesthetic device for hunting animals. However, at this time at least, very little is known about this alleged new device.

Standard plastic-metal bullets do not usually splinter on impact inside the body. Since they travel at a slower speed than high-velocity bullets, they usually lodge in soft tissue or an organ, without exiting or shattering. But when shot at close range, they can penetrate, even the skull, and exit. As many as half the plastic-metal bullets that have penetrated Palestinian bodies and lodged within them are left inside the bodies.

Rather than take the risk of encountering the occupation

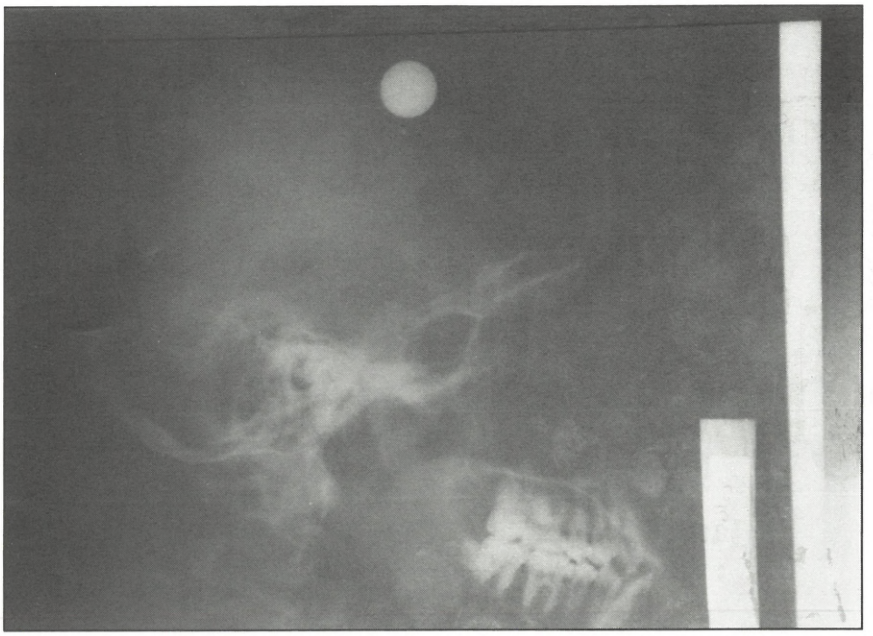

Photo: Judith Gabriel

X-ray of the *steel marble* lodged in an unidentified victim's brain. Inside the skull, the bullet continues to cause brain damage twisting along on its own insidiously destructive path.

authorities in hospitals many Palestinian victims opt not to have the plastic-metal bullet surgically removed. Thus, official Israeli counts of injuries due to plastic bullets are low. Israeli military authorities, do not record an official injury without having either the bullet itself, retrieved from the body, or a hospital X-ray.

"Black December," was how some referred to the last month of 1988, which saw the second-highest body count of the *Intifadah*. Many of the 31 registered deaths that month were from the supposedly less-lethal plastic bullets.

Deaths from plastic-metal bullet wounds escalated noticeably in the weeks after the historic events in Algiers and Geneva, events which culminated in the U.S. decision to begin official contact with the Palestine Liberation Organization. Indeed, Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin acknowledged that his new, Draconian crackdown measures were aimed at bringing down "the level of euphoria" among Palestinians in the wake of the recent PLO political successes.

In the ensuing five months, the bullets that were designed to "wound but not kill" killed at least 50 Palestinians.

In January 1989, the confusing new "open-fire" policy gave soldiers free rein to shoot plastic bullets at fleeing stone-throwers, and at persons preparing barricades of rocks and burning tires, or even at a group of children who might have stones in their hands. Later, it was clarified that the orders to shoot did not apply to demonstrators who were actually running away, only to demonstrators changing position. But in practice, the distinctions did not seem to matter.

There was increasing concern as the new year opened that Israeli soldiers were becoming trigger-happy, firing indiscriminately, in apparent panic, and at close range. Doctors reported that many victims were shot with the *steel marbles* from as little as 15 to 30 yards away.

A maelstrom of controversy swirled around the new policy. Knesset Member Amnon Rubinstein, head of the centrist Sinui party, charged that the new orders were "patently illegal." A petition to the Israeli High Court of Justice, the Israeli supreme court, by the League for Human Rights charged that the new orders violated international law, as put forth in the Geneva and Hague Conventions. As well, the petition charged, the Israeli soldiers were violating criminal law.

Ultimately, the legality of the firearms' policy was upheld by Israeli officials, despite charges by the U.S. State Department in its annual worldwide human rights report. Released in early February, the report noted that many of the deaths during the *Intifadah* were "unwarranted," and also charged that there were many unwarranted casualties among the more than 20,000 wounded. (For a full text of the report on the Occupied Territories see *The Return*, February 1989, p. 33.)

Instruments of crowd-control abound in the international arsenal, but since Israel officially considers the *Intifadah* to be an extension of hostile Arab activity against it,

See ***STEEL MARBLE,*** *page 40*

A Reagan Legacy U.S.-Israeli "Strategic Cooperation"

Jane Hunter

A former Israeli official who had begun to reveal details of covert operations conducted under a secret U.S.-Israeli agreement is dead. Amiram Nir was a "counterterrorism" adviser to then Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres in 1985 and 1986. He was also the man representing Israeli interests and playing a major role in the Iran-contra affair. On November 30, 1988, Nir died when the small plane in which he was flying crashed in Mexico.

Nir had worked closely with National Security Council (NSC) aide Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North on the U.S.-Israeli sales of arms to Iran, and on the secret support of the contras fighting against the government of Nicaragua. He had traveled with North and other NSC officials to Iran in May 1986, and two months later had briefed then Vice President George Bush on the arms-for-hostages deal with Iran.

Because Nir had been named as a likely witness at North's upcoming trial, because he and the Canadian woman he was traveling with had boarded the Mexican plane under assumed names, and because he had been talking to Bob Woodward of *The Washington Post* about the secret U.S.-Israeli agreement, there was a brief spurt of curiosity about whether foul play caused the plane to crash. Mexican authorities said the Cessna's engine had failed.

However, much less curiosity was stirred up about the substance of what Nir told Woodward: Under a secret agreement never disclosed to Congress, he and Oliver North had conducted a number of covert operations, including "at least two secret joint operations outside normal intelligence channels." The operations, Nir said, were authorized by U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres. Nir described only one of them: the organization in May 1986 of an armed force of Lebanese Druze for possible use in rescuing the U.S. hostages held in Lebanon. It is believed that the North-Nir operations were financed with profits from U.S.-Israeli arms sales to Iran.

Some U.S. officials Woodward interviewed identified the secret agreement as "terms of reference" and said it was originally intended as an accord governing the sharing of "counterterrorism" intelligence between the U.S. State Department and the Israeli foreign ministry. Woodward reported that Oliver North planned to introduce the agreement as evidence in his trial on criminal charges stemming from the Iran-contra affair.

Woodward had interviewed Nir in London last June, and, hoping for subsequent interviews, had honored his request to delay publishing these disclosures. His article appeared five days after Nir's death.

Rather than reopen their investigation into the Iran-contra affair, major media outlets simply reported, without challenge, the Reagan administration's denial that such an agreement existed. The media chose not to explore the meaning of what Yossi Gal, the Israeli embassy's spokesman, told them: "I won't go into *this* agreement. . . . Israel and the United States have lots of agreements. . . . We have never maintained that Nir was operating on his own or as a renegade. . . . Everything he did was

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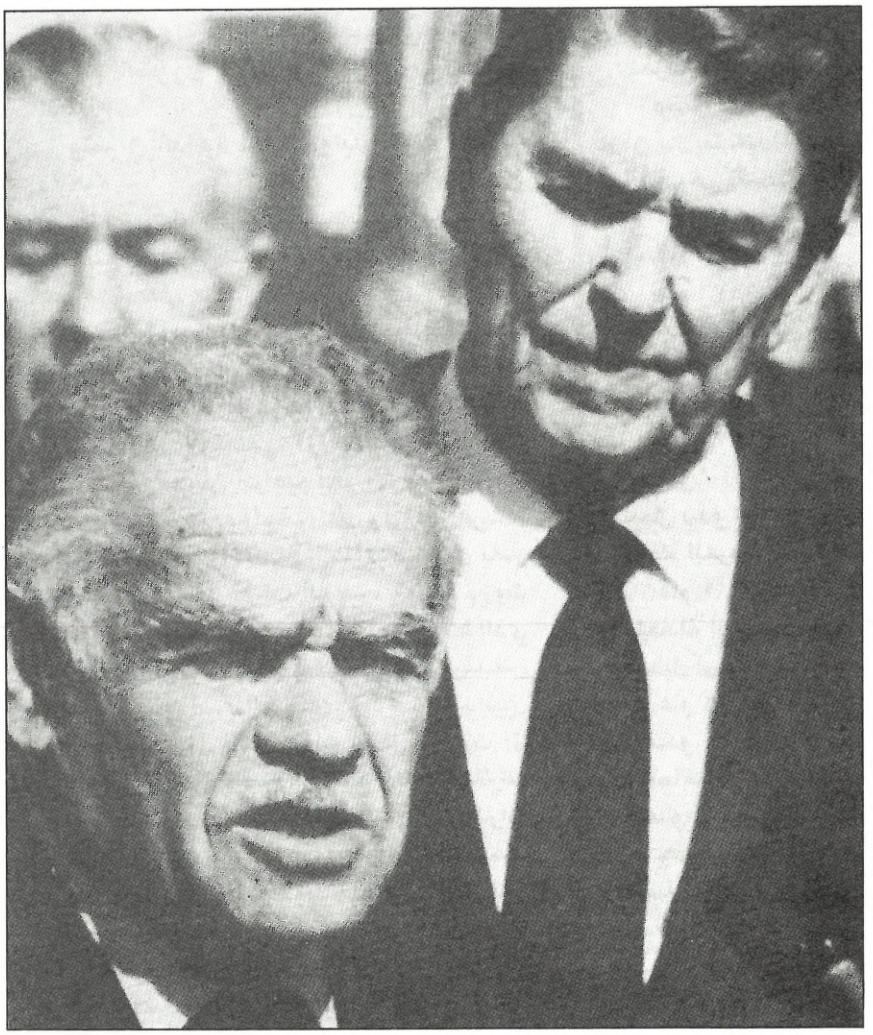


Former U.S. President Ronald Reagan with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

being done by the government of Israel" [emphasis added].

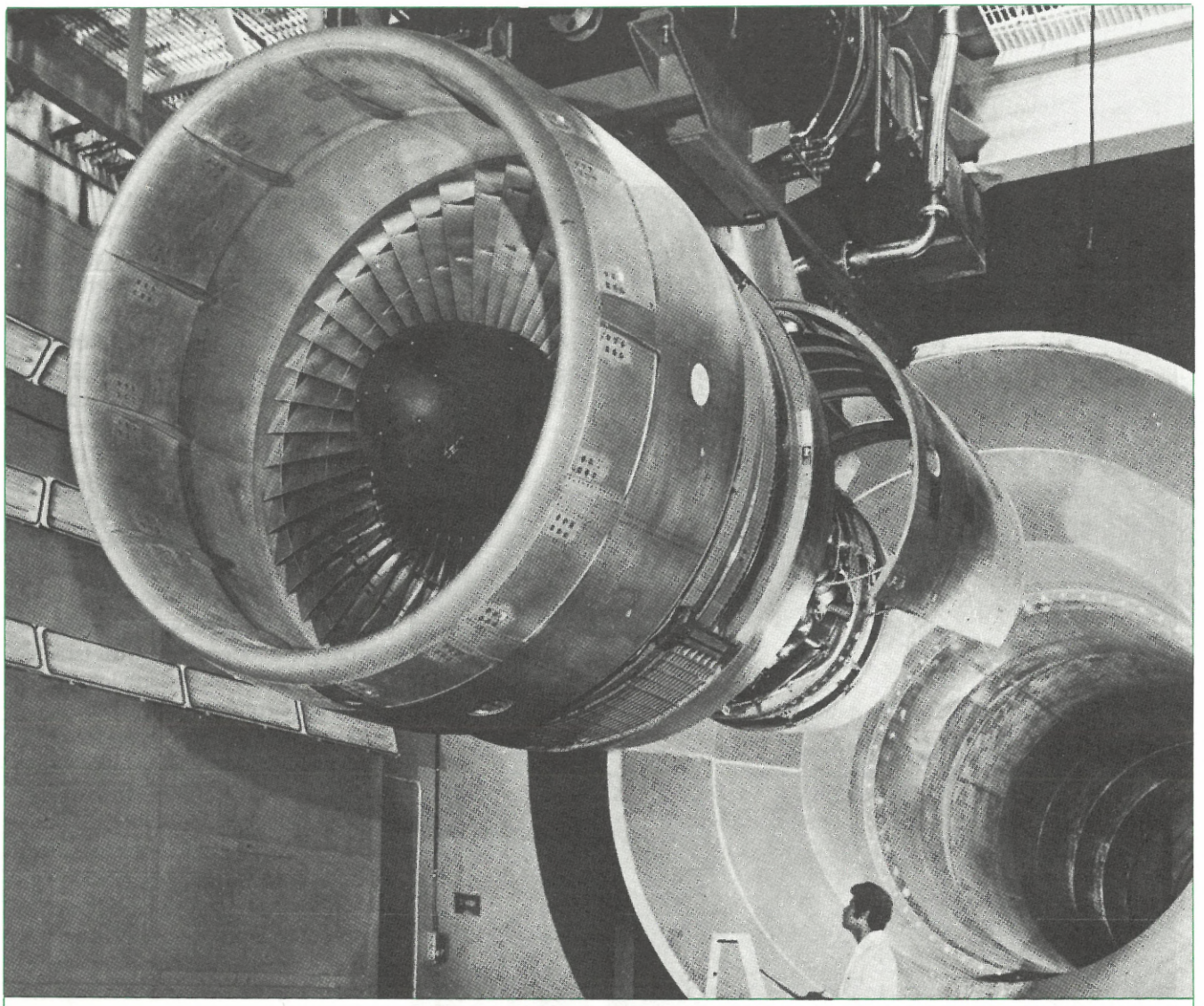
It was precisely this lack of curiosity that, over the span of the Reagan presidency, allowed a whole range of secret U.S.-Israeli activities, called "strategic cooperation," to flourish.

Before the Reagan administration came to office, the term "strategic cooperation" was hardly a standard in the lexicon of international affairs. Indeed, it was introduced by Alexander Haig, the administration's first secretary of state and a man renowned for his verbal coinages. In November 1981, Haig and Israel's then Defense Minister Ariel Sharon signed a "Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Cooperation," instituting a loose mutual defense pact and cooperation in the "Third World." The agreement was suspended a month later, when Israel annexed the Golan Heights, but the development of "strategic cooperation" never ceased because both governments saw a great need for it.

In developing "strategic cooperation," the Reagan administration wanted Israel to play an active role in areas where it knew U.S. public opinion would not allow it to venture, especially in Central America. In return, Israel wanted a number of concessions from the Reagan administration: a stronger U.S. alignment with Israel, at the expense of Arab governments; improved access to U.S. weapons technology; increased opportunities to sell its weapons to the U.S. military; and funding for its African development activities, through which it hoped to entice African governments to reestablish the diplomatic ties they broke in the wake of the 1973 War. Except for this last item, all these objectives were achieved in a series of verbal and written agreements.

Haig assigned his deputy, Robert McFarlane, to develop the new "strategic cooperation" with Israel. In 1983, when McFarlane left the State Department for the White House (where, as the president's national security adviser he would play a major role in the Iran-contra affair), he created a State Department committee to meet twice a year with Israeli officials to discuss matters in the world beyond the Middle East.

In October 1983, President Reagan signed National Security Decision Directive 111, establishing "strategic cooperation" with Israel. The following month, during a visit by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to Washington, the Reagan administration announced a new strategic agreement with Israel. Under the agreement, Israel received increased U.S. aid, technology packages for the Lavi aircraft, and a pledge, later fulfilled, for a free trade agreement. Israel agreed to "a dialogue on coordinating activity in the Third World," as Shamir put it. McFarlane's committee was brought under the agreement as the political-military committee, and Israel, which had already supplied arms to the Nicaraguan contras, began aiding the U.S.-backed mercenaries in earnest. Congress had already moved to restrict the CIA's support for the contras; it would soon forbid it entirely.



Jet engine being serviced inside Israel Aircraft Industries Bedek Aviation Division. Courtesy of MERIP

Israel's key operatives in Guatemala, Honduras, and Panama took part in operations which later became known as the "Harari Network" and the "Arms Supermarket" in which weapons were brought to Central America and the same aircraft and pilots were then used to fly cocaine from Colombia into the United States. These operations were conducted in coordination with the CIA. The Colombian Medellín cocaine cartel provided aircraft, pilots and funding.

During the same period, 1983 to 1986, there were reports that Israel's secret service, Mossad, acted on behalf of the CIA in West Africa. In early 1986, Mossad operatives based in the United States, with at least the passive support of the CIA, made an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the government of Ghana and free a number of CIA agents imprisoned there.

In southern Africa, Israel trained the South African-backed mercenaries of RENAMO (Mozambique National Resistance) fighting the government of Mozambique. Israel also helped South Africa and its proxy force, UNITA, wage a continuing war against Angola. Until 1985, the Reagan administration was barred by law from aiding UNITA.

In April 1984, Israeli officials let it be known that the strategic agreement they had forged with the United States included military cooperation. Over the years, that has come to include joint military exercises and the prepositioning of U.S. military equipment in Israel. The alliance was further buttressed when the Reagan administration gave Israel the status of a "non-NATO" ally, and brought it into the Star Wars (SDI) program, giving it a contract to develop an anti-missile missile.

In the United States, the alliance has been described in cold war terms: Israel is a regional bastion, or "strategic asset," against the Soviet Union. However, many Israeli leaders and a growing number of U.S. analysts consider the strategic alliance with the United States to be aimed against the Arab governments of the Middle East. Some U.S. observers dismiss the military aspects of the alliance as window dressing—justification for giving Israel the lion's share of U.S. foreign aid.

Last April, Israel and the United

States signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) formalizing and institutionalizing all aspects of the "strategic cooperation" they had developed during the Reagan years. The MOA mandates "frequent consultations and periodic meetings" between the heads of state and top defense and foreign affairs officials of both countries.

In its second article the MOA hints that the two nations will continue to carry out covert actions: "the director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the undersecretary of state for Political Affairs will meet regularly, for a Joint Political Consultation (JPC) to discuss a wide range of international issues of mutual interest with a view toward increasing their mutual understanding and appreciation of these issues." Prime Minister Shamir told an Israeli radio interviewer that "Not all the areas [of cooperation] are specified [in the MOA], but intelligence is included."

Ironically, although the Reagan administration originally envisioned "strategic cooperation" as a way of getting around congressional restrictions on U.S. intervention abroad, the MOA also incorporates a program under which the U.S. Agency for International Development finances Israeli development programs in the "Third World." The legislation establishing this program was written by a liberal Democrat, Representative Howard L. Berman (D-CA), in 1984. The development programs, some of which are in Central America, offer potential cover for intelligence operations.

Can the MOA strengthen U.S.-Israeli relations? After he signed it, Prime Minister Shamir noted with satisfaction that the pact, which runs for five years, binds the next administration. And repudiating rather than renewing the MOA in 1993 could carry a heavy political price.

But things can change quickly. Because of the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir, the Reagan administration canceled plans for a high-visibility ceremony for the signing of the MOA last April. Military exercises can dwindle to half-hearted formalities. And the Bush administration might succeed in getting congressional approval for covert operations abroad, lessening the need for joint action with Israel. There have been reports that relations between the CIA and Mossad are deteriorating.

Yet Israel might have the means to keep U.S. enthusiasm for "strategic cooperation" alive. In his interview with Bob Woodward, Amiram Nir said that there were many more secret joint activities of which he had yet to tell. Israel, said Nir, had in its possession "point-by-point documentation of all contacts, discussions, and undertakings with U.S. officials" during the Iran-contra affair. □

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Does Israel Have the Bomb?

Ibrahim K. Ali

"Israel will not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons to the Middle East, but it will not be the second." This statement has been consistently repeated over the past two decades by Israeli leaders. It was first articulated as early as 1970 by then-Israeli Ambassador to the United States Yitzhak Rabin, in an effort to mitigate U.S. concerns over the possible military use of the Israeli nuclear program. Since then, it was adopted as the official Israeli position by Foreign Minister Yigal Allon in 1976 and later by Moshe Dayan, a former defense and foreign minister, after the destruction of the Iraqi *Osiraq* nuclear facility in June 1981. In the midst of many reports about the Israeli nuclear capability, the ambiguity of the Israeli position has left the door wide open for speculation and interpretation by journalists, academics, and intelligence circles.

Israel's ambiguity has been conveniently and deliberately chosen to increase its margin of diplomatic maneuvering both in its relationships with the United States and in terms of its strategic posture in the Arab World. Had Israel opted to disclose its intention to produce atomic weapons, it would probably have unnecessarily jeopardized its relations with the United States and consequently put at risk the billions of dollars worth of annual economic and military aid. On the other hand, a covert active nuclear buildup diluted with an ambiguous position in the public diplomatic arena has helped to legitimize Israel's claim to the the United States that it is not an aggressor, thus strengthening its bargaining position in conventional arms supply negotiations. In addition, an overt Israeli nuclear buildup would have alienated or at least embarrassed Israel's friends in Congress, American Jewish organizations, and other pro-Israel lobbying groups.

The deliberate ambiguity in its position has served Israel's military and political objectives in the Middle East. Among Arab countries, it has created a state of uncertainty concerning Israel's real military strength and has thus wrested the military initiative from Arab countries aspiring to regain the territories lost in the 1967 War. Moreover, such ambiguity would frustrate and demoralize the Arab armies during any actual military combat with Israel.

Putting Pressure on Arab Governments

Politically, Israel's ambiguity is intended to discourage any Arab arguments for acquiring a nuclear capability that might be threatening to Israel. An overt Israeli nuclear program would make any Arab effort to match Israel's atomic program more acceptable, since it would be viewed by the international community as a gesture of self-defense. It is for these reasons that Israel surrounded its efforts in the nuclear arena with extreme secrecy, deliberately allowing limited space for political speculations.

So far, Israel has been successful

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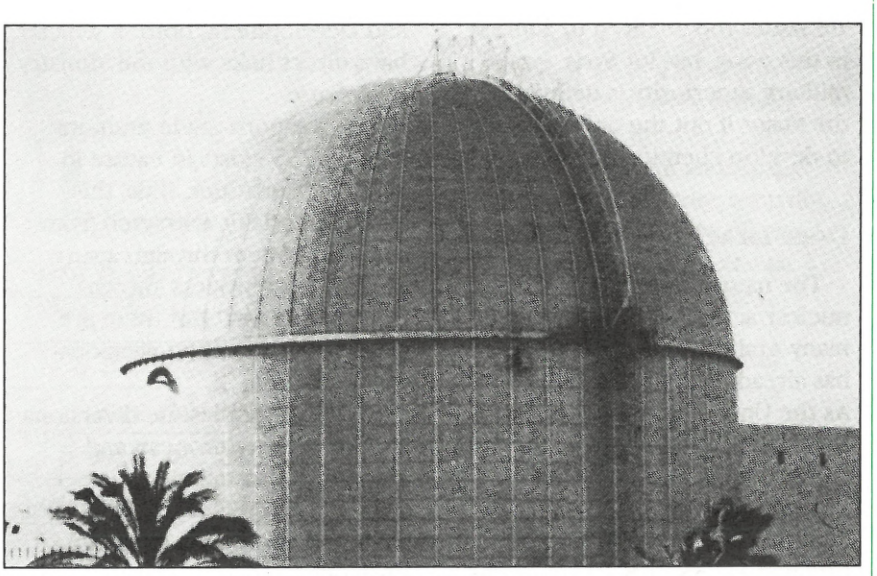
in diverting Western European and American negative public opinion away from its nuclear activities. In 1978, the Carter administration went so far as to expressly accept Israel's ambiguous statement as a word of no intention to cross the nuclear threshold. Thus, Israel's strategy managed to guarantee the flow of U.S. economic and nonnuclear military assistance. That amounted to $14 billion during the Carter administration alone. It also managed to avoid any international pressure to open its nuclear facilities for inspection to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).



The Sunday Times of London/Courtesy of Covert Action

The Dimona nuclear reactor in the Negev Desert.

Nevertheless, Israel's aggression against the Iraqi nuclear research center in June 1981, its conventional weapons superiority (which was underscored in the destruction of a large portion of the Syrian air force in June 1982), and its reluctance to relinquish the Arab territories occupied in 1967, have put the Arab states on the defensive. Consequently, some Arab governments aspired to develop and produce strategic weapons of their own.

Prior to the Israeli attack on the Iraqi nuclear reactor, there were no substantiated reports that might have implicated any Arab country of actually producing or developing atomic, chemical, or biological weapons.

In the mid-sixties, there were reports of an Egyptian research effort, aided by West German scientists, to produce rockets with warheads containing radioactive material extracted from cobalt. These efforts, however, did not prove successful, forcing President Gamal Abdel Nasser to abandon the whole program.

Libyan attempts to purchase an atomic bomb from China in the mid-seventies evaporated when Libyan President Muammar Qaddafi realized that such weapons were not for sale. The Iraqi government declared its nuclear reactor was to be used for peaceful aims only, and made availabe to the IAEA for inspection. Furthermore, Iraq had signed and ratified the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1970 which Israel still refuses to sign.

The Arab countries have probably learned three lessons from the Israeli attack on Iraq's nuclear reactor. First, that Israel is determined to maintain a monopoly over the political, and, if possible, the military use of the nuclear deterrence posture in the Middle East. Second, that embarking on a nuclear program with the potential to develop atomic weapons is militarily indefensible. Such a program can be detected by satellites and easily destroyed by a much superior Israeli air force. Finally, Arab states have learned that the only way to offset Israeli strategic and conventional military superiority is by producing weapons that might have political and strategic effects comparable to those of the Israeli atomic weapons, such as chemical or biological weapons. These kinds of weapons are harder to detect, easier to produce and hide, and can be stored in different locations making it virtually impossible for an Israeli air strike to destroy them. It is only within this context we can understand the motivation behind the recent reports concerning the production of chemical weapons in Iraq, Syria, and Libya.

It is, however, naive to force the point that Israeli strategic superiority is the only factor behind this dangerous arms race. In the case of Iraq, the eight-year-long war with Iran was another major element factoring in the military and political calculations of Iraqi decisionmakers. By the same token, the American attack on Libya in April 1986, and the occasional tension on the borders between Libya and Egypt, are all additional factors convincing Qaddafi that the possession of strategic arms is the only way to enhance his political prestige.

Syrian involvement in Lebanon and a possible threat from Iraq

are issues too involved to address in this essay, but for Syria, Israeli military superiority is definitely the major if not the only stimulus to develop chemical weapons.

Does Israel Have the Bomb?

The nature and extent of Israeli nuclear activities have convinced many Arab countries that Israel has already built a nuclear arsenal. As the United States proved in 1948, any country with the technical know-how and a sufficient quantity of fissile material (15-20 kilograms of highly enriched uranium U-235 or 8-10 kilograms of plutonium PU-239) can build an atomic bomb similar to the one detonated over Hiroshima. Israel met these prerequisites to produce an atomic bomb long ago.

Israel does not lack the scientific and technical experience required for the production of atomic weapons. By 1973, there were an estimated three thousand Israeli nuclear scientists and skilled technicians specialized in nuclear physics, nuclear chemistry, metallurgy, and other fields related to atomic energy. Considering the large number of Israeli students who are trained in various nuclear disciplines, both inside Israel and abroad, this number may have tripled by 1988.

Israeli nuclear research and training activities are conducted in three major institutes, the Department of Nuclear Science at the Weizmann Institute at Rehovoth near Tel Aviv, the Institute of Technology (Technion) at Haifa, and the Dimona nuclear reactor in the Negev Desert. Israeli nuclear research is planned and supervised by the Israeli Atomic Energy Commission and the National Council for Research and Development, both of which have direct links with the Ministry of Defense.

The weapons-grade uranium isotope 235 exists in nature in very rare quantities, thus, this fissile material is extracted from natural uranium through a very complicated process known as "enrichment." But there are other ways of getting weapons-grade uranium.

Through clandestine diversions from Western European and U.S. nuclear installations, Israel has managed to accumulate important quantities of highly enriched uranium. Between 1957 and 1967 only, around two hundred pounds of highly enriched uranium, which is sufficient to produce six to eight nuclear devices were reported missing from a U.S. corporation, Nuclear Material and Equipment Corporation (NUMEC) in Apollo, Pennsylvania. The missing weapons-grade uranium was believed to have found its way to Israel.

Furthermore, Israel has the capability to extract 3-5 kilograms of U-235 annually by using laser techniques in its own laboratories.

The other fissile material which is more commonly used for nuclear weapons production is plutonium PU-239. PU-239 does not exist in nature and must be separated from the spent fuel of a nuclear reactor in an operation known as "reprocessing." Israel creates plutonium and reprocesses it in its Dimona nuclear installations in the Negev Desert.

Initially, Israel had to import 60 percent of the natural uranium needed to fuel the Dimona reactor in the Negev (10 tons from France, and 4 from South Africa). By the mid-1970s it became self-sufficient in natural uranium production.

In Dimona, Israel has a 26 megawatt heavy water reactor which was constructed in cooperation with France. This reactor began actual operation in December 1963. It consumes 24 tons of natural uranium fuel per year. Attached to the Dimona facility are nuclear laboratories known as "Hot-Cells" and a reprocessing plant for the separation of plutonium. The reprocessing plant began operation as early as 1969. Generally, nuclear reactors can only be operated safely from six to eight months per year. If, in fact, the reactor is operated from six to eight months a year, the Hot-Cells, and the reprocessing facilities can produce 4-5 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium every year (this in addition to the 3-5 kilograms of U-235 separated annually by laser techniques).

This reactor has never been subjected to proper international inspection. The United States was able to acquire a permit for U.S. officials to visit limited areas within the Dimona facilities, once every six months, between 1963 and 1969. Their reports, however, described these visits as inadequate and insufficient to conclude whether Dimona is used for weapons production. Such visits ceased in 1969 when the plutonium reprocessing plant began operation. IAEA visits have always been banned. Such closed-door policies create the strong impression that the reactor is in fact being used for military purposes.

By conservative estimates, the amount of plutonium that might have been separated from the spent fuel of the Dimona reactor between 1963 and 1988 would be enough to build 13 to 16 nuclear warheads. And this estimate is based on the assumption that the power capacity

of the reactor has not been increased beyond 26 megawatts, and its operation did not exceed six to eight months a year. If this estimate is added to Israel's potential to produce nuclear heads from its highly enriched uranium deposits (7 to 9 warheads), by now it should have been able to accumulate 20 to 25 nuclear warheads. This number of warheads is sufficient to simultaneously threaten every single country in the Middle East.

Thus, the Dimona nuclear facilities constitute the backbone of Israel's nuclear potential. The absence of any international inspection of these facilities remains a source of extreme fear in the Arab World.

Another major component of Israel's nuclear infrastructure which has tremendous training and scientific value is the *Nahal-Soreq* reactor. Fueled by highly enriched uranium U-235, the *Nahal-Soreq* reactor is a small light water pool type reactor with an electric power capacity of 5 megawatts. Construction on the *Nahal-Soreq* reactor began in 1955 in cooperation with the United States under the Atoms for Peace plan of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Operation began in 1960.

This facility has been placed under strict U.S. inspection making it highly unlikely that it could have been used for weapons production. Nevertheless, it provides an opportunity for hundreds of Israeli nuclear scientists to conduct their research and training which in conjunction with the availability of other facilities, the acquired expertise can be used for military purposes.

To complete the picture, three more points need to be mentioned. First, Israel can easily afford the cost of producing an atomic bomb, which was estimated in the early 1970s at $10.4 million. Considering that between 1969 and 1973 Israel spent an average of $1.6 billion on defense annually, $10.4 million would have diverted less than 1 percent of its annual military budget to build one atomic bomb each year.

The fact that it has not been proven that Israel has tested a nuclear device does not mean that Israel has not constructed one. In fact, the very first bomb detonated at Hiroshima in 1945 had not been previously tested, and with the availability of sophisticated technology and computer simulations in the last twenty years, testing the effectiveness of a nuclear device is unnecessary.

Secondly, the fact that it has not been proven that Israel has tested a nuclear device does not mean that Israel has not constructed one. In fact, the very first bomb detonated at Hiroshima in 1945 had not been previously tested, and with the availability of sophisticated technology and computer simulations in the last twenty years, testing the effectiveness of a nuclear device is unnecessary.

Finally, Israel has an advanced network of delivery systems that could carry its nuclear warheads to any target in the Middle East. Israel has a large fleet of fighter aircraft including top-of-the-line U.S.-made F14s and F16s. In addition, Israel possesses medium-range Jericho missiles, and it has recently developed a long-range rocket. This rocket's abilities was tested last year when it delivered a satellite into orbit.

Left side view of an F16 dropping two 2,000-pound bombs.

Official U.S. Airforce Photo/Courtesy of MERIP

Stopping the Arms Race

Clearly, Israel in the last thirty years has acquired the material base and the sophisticated technical know-how to manufacture and deliver nuclear warheads. Whether or not Israel has actually assembled nuclear bombs, may also be a matter of semantics. Israel may have prepared all the components for quick bomb assembly. The ability to produce bombs within days if not hours is equivalent to the real possession of atomic bombs. □

BOOK REVIEW

"Years Of No Decision"

Geoffrey D. Schad

El-Farra, Muhammad. *Years Of No Decision*. London and New York: KPI, 1987.

In *Years Of No Decision* former Jordanian Ambassador to the United Nations Muhammad El-Farra has given his readers a detailed account of Zionism's effects on the Middle East. El-Farra has also given a personal memoir of a dedicated Palestinian nationalist, a legalistic defense of Palestinian claims to statehood, and a glimpse inside the halls of the United Nations when it was wrestling with the tensions that led to and followed the 1967 War. Neither history, autobiography, nor memoir, his book is at once all of them, and it is pleasant and informative reading for anyone desiring a deeply felt but calmly stated exposition of the Palestinian case.

Ambassador El-Farra's account, which is written episodically rather than chronologically, expresses two dominant themes: Israeli refusal to adhere to international law, including commitments it has explicitly agreed to; and U.S. pressure at the United Nations to block resolutions critical of Israeli behavior. In presenting these themes, the author gives the reader much insight into the political background and legal ramifications of several major international resolutions on Palestine.

Most important of these are U.N. General Assembly Resolution 181 of 1947 on the partition of Palestine, and U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967. In his arguments on these resolutions, El-Farra makes a strong case for the establishment of a Palestinian state based on Resolution 181. This is surprising given that he wrote this book before King Hussein's renunciation of Jordanian claims to the West bank and before the Algiers meeting of the Palestine National Council (PNC) declared such a state.

The essence of El-Farra's argument is summed up in the following passage from his preface:

> That the Palestinian people should share the same rights as every other people on this earth must be an undisputed truth, but the fact remains that their cause is not fairly championed by the countries in whose power it lies to help them. Neither do these same countries condemn the consistent and persistent aggression of Israel in terms which would leave no room for the Israeli government or any Israeli to doubt that they have wilfully flouted the conditions of their admission to the United Nations and have forfeited the good will of the world without whose assistance it would be they who were the homeless ones.

Motivated as much by his faith in the United Nations as a force for justice and peace, El-Farra returns time and again to Zionist/Israeli violations of international agreements.

He dates these violations back to the Balfour Declaration, which the Zionists violated both by building a state (rather than the "home" called for by the declaration) and by the continual violation during the mandate of the rights of Muslim and Christian Palestinians. Although

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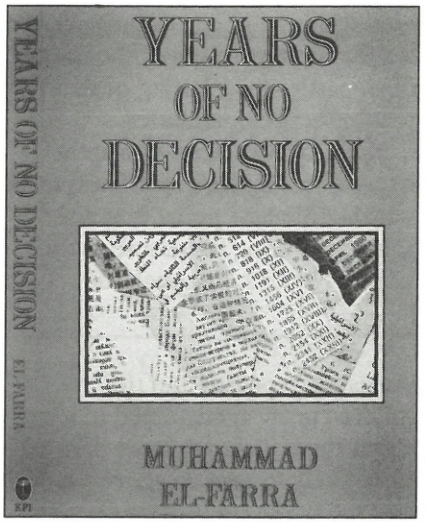
he carefully explains why the Palestinians rejected the partition Resolution, he calls Israel to task for its expansion beyond the partition boundaries and for its abandonment of the Protocol of Lausanne, which calls for the repatriation or compensation of the Palestinian refugees of 1948. At first, Israel adhered to the Protocol of Lausanne as a condition of its entry into the United Nations. In dealing with the events of 1947-49, El-Farra makes clear an important but often-forgotten point: the 1949 armistice lines are *armistice* lines, not borders. The actual borders must be negotiated upon the framework of Resolution 181, the partition Resolution.



El-Farra goes into great detail on Resolution 242, being a participant in the negotiations that led up to its passing. He reminds us that the so-called ambiguity in Resolution 242's clause concerning withdrawal (i.e. "from territories occupied" rather than "from the territories") is present only in the English-language text, and that in any event the framers' intent was clearly to provide for complete withdrawal from all territories occupied in 1967. Furthermore, Resolution 242 is not an end in and of itself, as much current commentary on the "peace process" would lead one to believe. Rather, Resolution 242 is the first step in the process, intended to return the situation to the *status quo ante* 1967 in order to begin comprehensive negotiations for peace.

El-Farra does not restrict himself to the legal, diplomatic or political aspects of the conflict. He is quite aware of the human dimension as well, being himself an exile from the land of his birth (he was brought up in Khan Younis and Jaffa). He tells a moving story of a Palestinian girl separated from her father in 1948, and devotes much time to explaining the plight of the refugees. His greatest emotion, however, is reserved for the Israeli raids on the West Bank which preceded the 1967 War and the Israeli raids on Jordan which followed, particularly the battle of Karameh. This is undoubtedly due to his position at the United Nations at the time, and he gives a good account of the difficulties he faced in getting condemnatory resolutions passed. His main villain in these accounts is Moshe Dayan; had El-Farra been the Lebanese ambassador in the 1980s that role could have easily been played by Ariel Sharon. Indeed, with all the attention that Sharon's misdeeds have received, the popular memory has tended to forget that previous Israeli leaders had done many of the same things.

Dayan's co-villain, the man with whom El-Farra has the greatest number of confrontations, is U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Arthur Goldberg. El-Farra and Goldberg had many confrontations over the years, and El-Farra devotes a good deal of space to these encounters. El-Farra, who was educated in the United States, is careful to contrast his admiration of American fair-mindedness and the U.S. system of government with U.S. behavior at the United Nations and in the Middle East, which he sees as contrary to American principles and national interests. He also draws a great contrast between Eisenhower's actions during the 1956 Suez crisis, which resulted in the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai, and Johnson's backing of Israel in 1967. In this light, El-Farra discusses the *Liberty* incident, and connects it with both Goldberg's delaying tactics in the U.N. Security Council during the 1967 War and the strategic cooperation agreement between the United States and Israel, which he sees as merely the formalization of secret agreements pre-dating the war. El-Farra reminds the reader that Israeli expansion and intransigence have been accomplished and maintained by U.S. arms and money, and that this state of affairs is severely detrimental to the United States.

Although El-Farra gives several examples of U.S. arrogance at the United Nations, a few stand out. On one occasion, El-Farra's superior, the Jordanian foreign minister, was subjected to what amounted to an inquisition by Goldberg, with the U.S. ambassador quoting out of context from El-Farra's speeches in order to bully the foreign minister to recall El-Farra under the threat of suspending U.S. aid to Jordan. On other occasions, when asked by the Jordanians for assistance in pushing forward the peace process, U.S. officials solemnly stated that all they could do was set up a meeting between the foreign minister and Golda Meir!

Although not personally involved at the time, El-Farra is scathing in his criticism of the Camp David accords, seeing them as imposed agreements that resulted in no real progress toward Middle East peace.

El-Farra is convinced that peace will not be achieved without Israeli recognition of Palestinian rights and abidance by international law. Although muted in his support of the PLO, he explains the reasons behind the growth of the Palestinian resistance and convincingly argues that the establishment of a Palestinian state is the only way to satisfy the needs of all parties for a lasting peace within secure boundaries.

Years Of No Decision is aptly named, and El-Farra clearly explains why Middle East peace was not achieved during his tenure at the United Nations. Although the combination of Israeli intransigence and blind American support for Israel has been discussed by many others, El-Farra's account is one of the best, coming as it does from a participant in the events who is at once a Palestinian, a diplomat, and a writer with a distinctive and restrained voice. □

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*See **ESCAPE**, page 11*

Shamir government might have, for tactical reasons, softened its position on procedural matters pertaining to the peace process. However, on matters of substance, it has clearly adhered to its intransigent position.

The best commentary on this government of "national blindness" came from Israeli human rights activist Shulamit Aloni. In the Knesset debate over the new government, Ms. Aloni said:

> After our enemies [i.e., the PLO] have recognized . . . that this country belongs to both peoples and have accepted the very principle on which the state of Israel was established, Resolution 181, and have recognized Israel within its June 4, 1967 borders, and accepted U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338—after all this has transpired . . . we continue to dream of a nonexisting world. □

VIOLENCE, page 23

This is why children may play dangerous games like bicycle racing, or have recurring bad dreams. This may also be why children play violent games.

At first, children are likely to take passive roles in such games as *Army and Arab* because they are afraid of the "soldiers." But as the games are repeated and the children grow accustomed to what scares them, they are more and more likely to take an active part to stop the bogeyman—they want to win the game.

Likewise, the children who play these games are more and more likely to take an active role in real life—where they will also want to win. □

STEEL MARBLE, page 29

it chooses weapons designed for use against "the enemy."

No matter what any given bullet is called—or what substance comprises its lethal core, the spate of recent injuries and fatalities is a result of how that bullet is shot, and how it tears through human flesh and penetrates into organs, bones, and skulls. Increasingly, doctors are seeing more and more bullet wounds in the head and upper body, injuries which are far more devastating than those to the limbs.

Said one overworked surgeon at Al-Maqassed Hospital:

> You hear the news: two died and 35 wounded. You know, if somebody dies, no problem, you put him in the grave and close it. It sounds inhuman, but you know, you close the chapter.
>
> But the wounded are the real problem. According to Israeli figures, last month there were 500 Palestinians wounded. And this is the problem actually. You know, the bullet is something blind. It goes everywhere, to different areas. Wherever it goes, it leaves a certain incapacitation. And this is the tragedy of this thing. These wounded people, when they leave the hospital, they will have problems from their injury forever. So when the news bulletin says two dead and thirty wounded, I forget the two dead, but I still remember the 30 wounded. □

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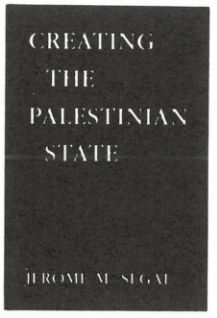

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